

No. 1509

NEW YORK, MAY 4, 1927

Price 8 Cents

PLUCK AND LUCK

THE RIVAL NINES

AND OTHER STORIES.

OR THE BOY
CHAMPIONS
OF THE REDS AND GRAYS

By Jas. C Merritt.



With both hands up to receive the ball, he stood directly on the base line. Jack dived between his legs, and slid to base, whilst he fell heavily to the ground, and the ball passed on to the catcher.

PLUCK AND LUCK

Issued Weekly—Subscription price, \$4.00 per year; Canadian, \$4.50; Foreign, \$5.00. Copyright, 1927, by Westbury Publishing Co., Inc., 140 Cedar Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second Class Matter Dec. 8, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

No. 1509

NEW YORK, MAY 4, 1927

Price 8 Cents.

THE RIVAL NINES

OR, THE BOY CHAMPIONS OF THE REDS AND GRAYS

By JAS. C. MERRITT

CHAPTER I.—Jack Millbanke and His Nine Reds.

"I tell you, Tom, it's the chance of a lifetime."

"Yes, I think so, too, but the odds are against us."

"Where there's a will there's a way. I think we can beat 'em if we make up our minds to do so."

"But if they make up their minds to beat us, what then?"

"They don't think enough of our playing to even practice any at all. If we work hard, and say nothing, I think we can get our nine up to the point where we can just walk away with them."

"Well, I'm with you, Jack. We have got a lot of splendid fellows in our nine, but they seem to play for fun or exercise. They don't seem to care to win honors or pennants."

"That's because they have given no thought to it. I'll have a talk with 'em this evening, and see if they will go into it."

Jack Millbanke was the young captain of a baseball nine, of the bustling little city of Lawrence, on the beautiful Delaware. They were all under twenty years of age, but splendid young fellows. Their uniform was red from head to feet, so they were called the Reds by their friends.

They were in the habit of meeting nearly every evening in the mill yard to talk over baseball matters, and perfect their organization as a club, and on the evening of the day on which Jack had told Tom Henley he wanted to play the Grays, they met a little earlier than usual. The whole nine was present.

"You have heard the news about Miss Mandeville's offer, haven't you?" Jack Millbanke asked them.

"I have," replied Tom.

"I haven't" said Joe Mix.

"Tell us about it," said Fred Alden. "I've heard nothing about it at all."

"Well, it's thus. She is a great lover of the game, and Berkeley Ward, the captain of the Grays, is courting her. She's rich as mud, you know, and as pretty as red shoes. She wants Lawrence to win the League pennant this year, and has promised to give a silk banner to the nine and a diamond-studded gold badge to the

captain of the club that wins it. The Grays are the due nine, you know, and all good players, too, and she makes the offer for the Grays to get it. Now we are all ironworkers, hardy, strong, active and fleet of foot. I don't believe we have one in our club who is not stronger than the best man in the Grays. Yet we can't play ball with 'em, because we lack training. If we train right, and in dead earnest, we can beat 'em, and take the prize. The question is, shall we do it?"

"I say yes," said Tom.

"So do I," chorused the others.

"That settles it, then. We must do some hard work, study the rules of the game, and say nothing to any one about what we are trying to do."

"That's it! That's good sense," said Tom Henley. "I've got a cousin living in Brooklyn who knows more about the game than any one I ever heard of. He can pitch a curve ball so as to make it look like a corkscrew going through the air. If we can get him to give us some points we can knock out the Grays without any trouble."

"That's a good idea," said Jack. Write to him, and find out what he will come here and coach us one month for."

"I'll write and mail the letter before I go to bed tonight," Tom replied.

"Now, boys, the main thing is to keep mum. Don't say a word. We can keep our mouths shut if we try to. Don't ever talk baseball with anybody. Tomorrow evening we'll go out and practice as soon as we leave the mill, not going home for half an hour."

With that understanding they separated. Three days later Tom Tenley had a letter from his cousin. He would come for \$25 a week and expenses. They chipped in and raised the expense money on the spot. Two days later the famous pitcher was in Lawrence, under an assumed name, and he met the nine in the mill yard after six o'clock that evening. He put the boys through their paces. After a half hour's exercise he said to Jack:

"You have some of the best raw material I ever saw, and I can train them to beat the crack teams of the National Baseball League. But look here, I've a little secret to tell you, which your own interest will tell you must be kept mum. I've been ruled out by the League managers on account of a misunderstanding and a

THE RIVAL NINES

quarrel. I want revenge, and will work hard to get it. If I can train you fellows so as to clean 'em all out on the field my revenge will be complete. I pledge you my word to do it if you will pledge me yours to do your best."

"We'll do that!" exclaimed each in a breath.

"Very well. Tom here will make the best pitcher. I'll put him on to all the curves. I can give him all the points in a few hours, but he will have to practice hard to perfect himself in the art. You are all good runners, and hard hitters. Fred Alden there is a good catcher. Have you masks and gloves?"

"Yes, we have everything," Jack replied.

"Then we will begin tomorrow evening at 6.15, and every one must play for all he is worth."

The boys were never so much in earnest in anything in all their lives before. They seemed to have suddenly awakened to the knowledge of great possibilities before them. Each one was eager, buoyant and expectant, and a handsomer lot of young fellows could not have been grouped together in Lawrence even by an exacting committee of young ladies—albeit they were all mechanics.

The trainer had his cousin Tom out in his back yard by daylight the next morning, showing him how to give curves and twists to balls in sending them to the bat. Tom was an apt pupil, and soon mastered the theory. His trainer grew elated over his progress, and proceeded to show him how to judge what sort of balls were coming to him by watching the pitcher's elbow. A close observer could thus get on to a straight, a curve, or a twister, ere the ball left the pitcher's hand.

That evening, in the old mill yard, not one of the nine could hit Tom's balls. They made the batsman dizzy, and all were discouraged.

"That's all right," said the trainer. "I am going to show you how to get on to those curves as they come from the pitcher, and then he gave them all the points. Tom pitched him balls with dizzy curves, and he smashed them with the bat every time. Then Tom took the bat, and did the same thing. Jack himself caught the idea, and sent the ball skyward several times. Fred Alden was a good catcher. They made such progress that they would not leave to go home until it became too dark for them to see the ball. They never missed an evening, unless there was a downpour of rain, and at the end of a month they had all the confidence of the crack players of the league.

"Now, boys," said Jack, "the papers have several times mentioned the Grays as the champions of Lawrence who were to play for the pennant this year. We must challenge them to a series of games—the best three in five—to settle the question as to whether they are really the best ball players in Lawrence or not. Shall we do so?"

"Yes, challenge them!" they all cried.

"Very well. I'll do so tomorrow."

The next day Berkeley Ward, captain of the Grays, received this challenge by the hand of a messenger:

BERKELEY WARD, Captain of the Grays Baseball Nine:

The Reds Baseball Nine hereby challenges the Grays to a game of baseball in order to show

them that they do not know how to play a good game under the rules of the National League.

JACK MILLBANK,
Captain of the Reds.

CHAPTER II.—Jack Makes a Gallant Rescue.

Berkeley Ward was employed in the Bank of Lawrence, in which his father was a director and heavy stockholder. He was a young man of some two and twenty years of age, who had been spoiled by an indulgent mother and a rich father. Well educated, handsome and proud, he had a large circle of acquaintances in the best society of the busy little city.

He had organized the baseball club called the Grays, and had been its captain for two seasons. His sister was intimate with Jesse Mandeville, the beautiful daughter of the president of the bank, and the two girls soon became ardent admirers of the game. As a matter of course, the Grays were their pets at all times. When he received Jack Millbanke's challenge, Berkeley Ward was inclined to treat it with silent contempt, and throw it into the waste basket. But Henry St. Clair, who was with him at the time, said, on reading it:

"It won't do to ignore this, Ward. We would be laughed at and jeered were you to refuse acceptance."

"I believe the best thing to do then is to accept their challenge," said Ward.

The next day after sending the challenge Jack Millbanke received Berkeley Ward's acceptance of it, naming the following Saturday afternoon as the time and the Grays' grounds as the place. He told the boys about it, and they were almost beside themselves with joy.

"Make no boasts or threats," he said to them, "for they come back sometimes to plague a fellow. We'll keep up our practice as usual, and do our level best every time."

When they had practiced a half an hour the members hurried home to late suppers. Jack had to go on an errand to the home of an aunt of his who lived down on the river road, near the edge of the town. The sun was just sinking out of sight as he entered the yard of his aunt's little home. As he started toward the house, some fifty feet back from the gate, he heard the clatter of horses' hoofs up the road. He looked in that direction, and saw two young ladies, mounted on spirited steeds, coming like the wind.

"They must be running a race," he said to himself, turning and going back to the gate to see them go by.

Just as he reached the gate the steeds dashed by like a cyclone.

"They are running away!" he gasped.

About 100 yards below the gate a man ran out into the middle of the road and waved a hat and cane in the air to stop them. The animals made a sudden turn and dashed for the river. Jack opened the gate and sprang out into the road just in time to see the two horses plunge into the river, each rider uttering a piercing scream at the same time.

"Good heavens!" gasped Jack, making a break for the river bank.

He knew the spot well. The water was deep

there, and the current ran strong at times. Just as he reached the bank, horses and riders came to the surface, but each horse was riderless, and the girls were helpless in their riding habits. Off went Jack's hat, coat and shoes, and in he plunged. The current was bearing them away. He swam out to the one farthest downstream, who was screaming "save me!" at the top of her voice.

He caught her around the waist with his left hand, saying:

"Be quiet, now, miss. You're all right."

"Oh, save me!" she gasped, clutching him around the neck with both hands.

"Yes, of course. That's what I'm here for. Just hold to my shirt-collar with one hand and I'll save the other lady, too."

By that time the other lady had floated toward him. She was unconscious, and her head was under water. Jack caught her and held her so her face would be above water. The man who had turned the horses toward the river stood on the bank calling lustily for help.

"Get a boat!" Jack yelled to him.

The man ran to another man who was near a boat. They pushed the boat into the water, jumped in and rowed to the girls and Jack.

"Take this lady in," Jack said to them, and the unconscious one was lifted into the boat.

"Now we'll swim to the shore," said Jack to the other. "Just hold on to me." And he struck out with powerful strokes that soon landed them on the bank.

She stood up, and looking at Jack, said:

"You are a brave man, a hero. I owe my life to you. But let's look to Emory. They are taking her out of the boat."

By this time a score of men and women had come from the houses along the road, and among them was Mrs. Adams, Jack's aunt. The woman took charge of the unconscious girl.

"Take her into some house and roll her across a barrel," said an old fisherman.

Jack lifted her in his arms and bore her to his aunt's house, followed by all the women. Just as he entered the house with her the girl recovered. She had swooned from fright, and had swallowed but little water. Mrs. Adams hastened to prepare a room for the two girls, and in a few minutes they were out of reach of the curious crowd.

CHAPTER III.—The First Game of the Reds and Grays.

Seeing that the two girls were safe in the house, Jack hurried back to the river to look after the two horses. Both animals had started to swim upstream, but the strong current soon sent them the other way. Several boats chased them, and in a little while both were secured and brought ashore, but little the worse for their plunge. They were both very fine animals, and were much admired by the crowd which had gathered. Jack took charge of them, and led them up to his aunt's house, where the two young ladies were. His aunt met him, and said the girls were both snug in her bed, and anxiously waiting for some one to go to their homes for a carriage and some dry clothing.

"I'll go," he said. "Where do they live?"

"One is Miss Jesse Mandeville, and the other Emory Ward, and—"

Jack started, and gave a prolonged whistle, expressive of astonishment.

"What's the matter?" his aunt asked. "Do you know them?"

"I know of them," he replied as he started away on a run. His own home was right on the way, the Mandevilles living half a mile beyond him. On reaching his home he ran up to his room, changed his clothes and hurried to the Mandeville's mansion, which was nearest. A servant answered the bell.

"I have called to let Mrs. Mandeville know what has hapened," he said to the servant. Miss Jessie's horse ran away with her and plunged into the river. She was rescued, and is now at the home of Mrs. Adams, on the river road, waiting for dry clothes and her carriage."

The servant ran and told her mistress, and the next moment the household was in a great uproar. Mrs. Mandeville very properly swooned, and Mr. Mandeville came to the door to see the messenger who bore such extraordinary news. Jack explained again, and then the carriage was made ready and a servant sent to notify the Wards.

A physician was sent for to look after Mrs. Mandeville, while a maid obtained some dry clothing for Jessie. In half an hour the carriage was off with the banker himself inside, and Jack upon the seat with the coachman. They found the two girls in a lively humor, evidently none the worse for their wetting.

When they were dressed, and ready to leave, the two girls went up to Mrs. Adams and kissed her, saying they would both come out to see her, and show her how much they appreciated her kindness. Miss Mandeville turned to Jack, and held out her hand, saying: "I owe you my life, and hardly know how to tell you how grateful I am. I won't insult you by offering you a reward, but I beg you to keep this in remembrance of the girl whose life you saved," and she drew a sparkling diamond ring from her finger as she spoke and placed it in his hand. "Had you not come to us we would both have been drowned. You just ought to have seen him, papa! He didn't hesitate a moment, but plunged in and swam out to us!"

Jack tried to refuse the gift, but she would not let him, and during the next moment Emory Ward stepped up to him and placed his ring in his hand, saying as she did so:

"I wish to be remembered, too. I am sure I shall never forget the man who saved my life."

Jack tried his best to refuse the gift, but without avail.

"It's no use, young man," said Mr. Mandeville, laughing and stepping forward to grasp his hand. "Those girls will have their own way, and you may as well submit. You have done a manly thing, and I want to say that you can draw on my friendship as long as you live, and I shall always be glad to call you my friend."

"Well, I suppose I can't help myself," Jack replied, as the banker and the two girls went out to the carriage.

"They are very grateful, at any rate," said Mrs. Adams, when they were gone.

"And very beautiful, too," Jack replied, look-

THE RIVAL NINES

ing at the rings the two girls had placed in his hand. "But I wish they had not given me these. It looks too much like paying me for what I did."

"Oh, no, not at all," said his aunt. "She said she would not insult you with a reward, but did want you to take that to remember her by. I heard her say that."

"Yes, so did I. It's all right, I guess, but I can't wear them."

"Why not? They are yours."

"What! A poor boy like me wear \$500 diamond rings! I am not an idiot if I am your nephew."

The turned quickly and gave him a slap, at which he laughed good-naturedly.

"You might do worse things than wear diamond rings," she remarked.

"Well, maybe I'll be engaged one of these days, and won't have to buy a ring for my girl," and he laughed as he stowed them away in one of his pockets.

Ten minutes he was on his way home, wondering what Berkeley Ward would think of his saving his sweetheart and sister from drowning.

When he reached home he went into the kitchen and asked for his supper. His mother wanted to know how his clothes, which he had taken off an hour before, became so wet, and he told her the story of the rescue.

"Oh, Jack!" she exclaimed. "I am so glad you did that!"

"So am I, mother," he replied.

The next day the papers contained a full account of the rescue, and Jack became a hero at once. Only one more day intervened, and then the Reds and Grays would meet on the diamond. The Reds in the mill where Jack worked gave him a round of cheers when he went to his place, and the superintendent came around to shake hands with him. At noon the cashier sent for him to call at the office, and he hastened to respond.

"The company will furnish your team with music tomorrow at the baseball game. The Lawrence Cornet Band will be subject to your orders all the afternoon," said the cashier.

"By George!" exclaimed Jack. "We'll all get the big head, I'm afraid!"

"You don't want to let your head swell, my boy. The Grays are a good team, you know."

"Yes, so they are. We have no reputation to lose, though, but we are going to do our best." And then he thanked the company, in behalf of the Reds, and went back to his work.

Precisely on time the next day the Reds, in their scarlet uniforms, marched out to the baseball grounds with the Lawrence Cornet Band at their head. When they reached the ground, and entered the inclosure, Jack and the others of the nine were astounded at the vast audience assembled to see the game. The vast majority had come merely to see the young hero who had saved two lives two days before. But for that incident, three-fourths of those present would have stayed away, believing that the Grays would wipe up the ground with the Reds.

When the Reds came on the grounds two policemen placed themselves at the head of the band and led the way around the field.

"We are in for it, boys," said Jack in low tones. "Follow the band, two together, arm in arm."

And then he carried the bat on his shoulder like a musket, and marched bravely around the field at the head of the nine.

"There he is! That's him with the bat!" called out hundreds, and a great cheer greeted him all along the line.

The Grays seemed quite taken aback by the demonstration, and Berkeley Ward whispered to Henry St. Clair:

"We crowd is with him, but we'll give him a beating that will make him sick."

As soon as the music ceased the umpire called the game, and St. Clair of the Grays went to the bat, and Tom Henley went to the pitcher's box.

When Henley began to imitate the squirming of professional pitchers before delivering the ball the Grays laughed outright. But when the ball went at St. Clair in a dizzy curve they were astounded. St. Clair didn't strike at it, and the umpire called:

"One strike!"

The second ball went like an aerial corkscrew, and St. Clair, dazed and bewildered, let it pass.

"Two strikes!" called out the umpire, and Berkeley Ward turned pale.

The third ball went fair and straight, but curved within three feet of the bat and was caught by the catcher, St. Clair having swung at it and missed.

This was a revelation to the Grays, and sensation was in the air. No one on the ground had heard that Tom Henley knew anything about pitching curved balls. Berkeley called Jones to the bat. He smashed the ball, and was caught out by Mix. Miller followed, and sent the ball plump into Jack Millbanke's hands, and the Reds went to the bat.

Mix went to the bat, and St. Clair went to the pitcher's box. Mix smashed the ball, and got to first, then dashed to second. Alden sent the ball to right field, and Mix got to third. The next batter got to second, and Mix got home amid wild cheering. The Reds scored one run in the first inning.

In the second inning Wilmot went to the bat and got to second base. Merritt made a hit, and the ball went to Alden. Before it could be returned both batters had crossed the home plate. The Grays leaped for joy. They had scored two runs. Ellis was caught out. The Reds played well in their half, but did not make a run.

In the third inning the Grays made one run and the Reds two, and the score was tied.

Everybody was astonished at the playing of the Reds, and Berkeley Ward hurried here and there, giving whispered warnings to his men.

In the fourth inning the Grays scored two runs, and the Reds three, and again they were ahead. How the mill people yelled.

In the fifth inning Miller smashed the ball to left field, and dashed to second, finally stealing third, and coming home on Jones' hot grounder to right center, thus evening up the score again.

Again the Reds were at the bat. The first man up flied out, the second fouled out, and the third flied out. The Grays fared no better, and the seventh inning ended in the same way—no runs for either side.

Never did an audience watch a game with more breathless interest.

"Steady, Reds!" called out Jack, and the eighth inning began.

Henley bunted the ball, and was thrown out. Jones settled Mix. Miller caught out Alden.

The Grays fared no better, and were retired without a run.

"They are still tied!" cried a voice from the grandstand.

"Ten to one on the Reds!" yelled a hoarse voice back of first base.

In the ninth inning the Reds had two men out when Jack went to the bat. He sent a hot grounder to left center, and dashed for second. The ball was sent to nail him at third, but passed the third baseman, and Jack scuttled for the home plate, while every man, woman and child on the ground yelled encouragement.

On, on he ran, and the yells became frantic.

The ball sped through the air to the catcher. By a supreme effort Jack slid to the plate on his chest, with just one second to spare. Then he rolled over on the ground, his face turned skyward, and over it seemed to spread the pallor of death.

CHAPTER IV.—Jack is hurt in the Game

Jack's home run saved the game, and the wildest cheering that ever greeted a nine in the moment of victory burst from the vast audience. Even those who had always backed the Grays caught the enthusiasm, and cheered, too. The band played "Hail to the Chief," and the Reds threw their caps in the air.

Suddenly Tom Henley looked around and saw that Jack still lay by the home plate, white and motionless.

"By George! Look at Jack, boys!" he exclaimed, running up to where Jack lay. Others rushed up, and then they tried to lift him to his feet.

"Good Lord!" gasped Fred Alden. "He's dead!"

Joe Mix ran out into the field, away from the little gray group Jack, and waved his hand for silence.

Instantly the audience became quiet.

"Is there a doctor here?" Joe sang out. "Millbanke is hurt!"

Deeps murmurs of sympathy were heard on all sides, and hundreds rushed for the home plate.

"I am a physician!" cried a tall, stalwart man, making his way through the crowd to where Jack lay. "Stand back! Give him air!"

In a few moments a clear space of some ten or fifteen feet was made, and the doctor at once made an examination of the unconscious captain of the Reds.

"Here's some ammonia, doctor," a man said, pushing his way through the crowd.

"Ah! glad you thought of it," said the physician, taking the bottle, removing the cork, and applying the mouth of the bottle to Jack's nose.

In half a minute he gasped, then he uttered a groan and opened his eyes. The doctor gave him a sip of icewater, and then asked:

"How do you feel now?"

Jack looked up at him in utter amazement, as if his thoughts were anywhere else but there.

"What's the matter?" he finally asked.

"The Reds won, Jack!" sung out Tom Henley.

"Did we win? Did I get home in time?" Jack asked, as if the news electrified him.

"Yes, but you fell unconscious," said the doctor. "Are you hurt, anywhere?"

"Oh, it was the most terrible strain of my life. It was just a little too much for me, I guess. I'm all right now."

Joe Mix again ran out into the centre of the field, waved his hand to the audience, and said:

"Jack Millbanke overstrained and fainted. He says he's all right now. Let's give him three cheers and a tiger!"

Men and women cheered wildly, giving the Reds' captain a dozen tigers ere they ceased. Then Joe saw a young lady beckoning to him from the grandstand, and he made his way to her. She had a bouquet of handsome flowers in her hand.

"Take these to Jack, and tell him Jessie Mandeville sends them with her congratulations," and she gave Joe the flowers as she spoke.

When he reached Jack he found him on his feet, surrounded by the mill hands, who had broken on to the field, and were trying to get him on their shoulders. The doctor was keeping them at bay, and demanding that Jack be sent home in a carriage.

"Here, Jack—from Miss Mandeville," said Joe, thrusting the bouquet into his hand. "And she sent her congratulations with it."

"Did she?" And Jack's yes told how glad he felt in the knowledge that she recognized the victory the Reds had won.

"Here, Jack!" cried Fred Alden, pushing his way to his side. "Mr. Mandeville has sent his carriage to take you home."

"Then you had better go at once," said the doctor. "And let me advise you to go right to bed and stay there till morning. You have had a severe strain, and must take care of yourself."

"Yes," said Jack. "I feel as weak as a kitten. What is your name, doctor?"

"Dr. Jaynes—here is my card. But you don't owe me anything, my boy," and the doctor led him to the carriage and saw him safely seated inside of it with Alden and Mix to take care of him.

The carriage whirled away, followed by a volley of cheers from the crowd. Fred Alden told the coachman where to go, and a half hour later Jack was in his humble home. But he did not wish to go to bed. He said he was all right.

"But you must do as the doctor told you," said Fred, and his mother, who was greatly excited, also insisted on his obeying the doctor; so at last he retired, and the other two boys hurried away to their own homes.

CHAPTER V.—The Two Notes.

The defeat of the Grays in their first game with the Reds created a most unusual sensation in the city of Lawrence. The Grays were the pets of Lawrence society, and had held their heads up high on the field. It was a terrible blow to them and their immediate friends.

"I don't see why you should feel so mortified over it," said Berkeley Ward's father to the young captain of the Grays, as they rode away from the field in the family carriage. "It was such a close game that the other side can't have much to crow about."

"But they will crow, and that so loudly that the whole city will be tired of it," said Ward very bitterly. "Why, if we had beaten them two to

THE RIVAL NINES

one they would have crowded because it was no worse. I can't understand it. Our team never played better—never made a single mistake. I can't say that the other fellows did, either. Oh! to be beaten by that crowd of mill boys, and be forced to hear them crowing for a whole week! It's the worst dose that I ever had to take. Then that rescue the other day has set the girls wild over Jack Millbanke."

"The fellow was hurt as he reached the home plate, I believe. Did you hear how he was before leaving the field?"

"No. I didn't care enough about him to inquire."

"I guess you are not in a frame of mind to recognize anything good in Jack Millbanke today," said his father.

"I haven't seen anything good in him yet," was the reply.

"He played a good game of ball today, didn't he?" the old man asked.

"Yes, with the help of eight others."

"And rescued two girls from drowning without any help, eh?"

"Two men in a boat helped him."

"See here, Berkeley, my boy, let me give you a bit of advice. Don't let anyone hear you speak of Jack Millbanke as you have to me. You will get the name of a soulless ingrate, and earn the contempt of even the newsboys and bootblacks."

Berkeley made no reply, and in a little while he and his father reached home. Emory Ward had just arrived, and had told her mother of the defeat of the Grays. She saw Berkeley going up to his room to change his uniform, and said:

"Oh, Berkeley, what a close game it was!"

"Yes, very close," he replied, going on up to his room.

When he came down she said to him:

"Had it been the Grays' turn at the bat they would have won."

"Yes, but luck was against us," said he bitterly.

"You were with Jessie. What does she think of it?"

"She says the Reds are a splendid team, and that the Grays will have to work hard to get the banner and badge."

"I guess she wants the Reds to get them," he remarked, with a hard look in his eyes.

"I don't believe that of her, Berkeley. The Grays are her friends, and she knows only young Millbanke of the Reds."

"Yes, but she thinks he is a hero—just as you do. Most girls are built that way—to lionize a fellow when he has done something out of the usual run of things. You forget that he was well paid for—"

'He didn't know us when he came to our rescue. If Jessie should hear you speak that way she would be so disgusted she might snub you ever after. She despises a mean man—as all women do.' With that, she arose and left him to his reflections.

The night after the victory of the Reds over the Grays the mill hands had a jubilee, and painted the town red. Somehow, the feeling that the Grays were dudes, who turned up their noses at the workers in the mills, had taken possession of the operators in all the mills, hence their jubilation over their defeat. They marched through certain streets, singing songs and cheering, until the police had to disperse them. But they were so good-natured that no arrested were made, and

by midnight all was quite again. But the happiest man in Lawrence that night was the man who had coached the Reds. He was known by the name of Alex Scudder there, and no one suspected him of being the famous pitcher who had been ruled off the field by the league managers.

"I tell you, Tom," he said to his cousin, Tom Haley, "I never felt so happy in my life as when Jack touched the home plate with the winning run. I never saw a man strain harder to win than he did, and it almost killed him. Every one of the team did his best. I can make 'em the crack baseball nine of the world."

"That's just what we want," replied Tom.

"I can do it. You will all do better in the next game."

"So will the Grays. They will practice hard during the week."

"But you will give 'em some balls their batsmen can't understand," and he winked at his cousin and smiled.

The next day was Sunday, and the bustling little city was very quiet. But the great game of baseball was almost the sole topic outside the pulpits.

Jack Millbanke felt quite sore the next morning, and did not get out of bed till near noon. Then he took a bath and said he felt all right. In the afternoon a man came to the boarding-house with a bouquet of flowers and a note from Miss Jessie Mandeville. The maid of all work took both up to Jack, saying:

"The man who brought 'em is waiting downstairs."

"Eh? Waiting for what? Oh, yes, the note." And he took it and opened it.

MY DEAR FRIEND: You were hurt yesterday on the baseball ground, and I have been anxiously waiting to hear, through some one who may have seen you, whether or not the injury is serious. But I have to send to you direct to find out. I congratulate you and your friends on your hard-won victory, and sincerely hope you have entirely recovered from your injury. Believe me your sincere friend.

—JESSIE MANDEVILLE.

Tom Henle and Scudder were with Jack when the note came.

"By George!" exclaimed Jack. "Here's the toughest job of my life."

"What is it?" Tom aswed.

"I am to answer that note. I never wrote a note to a young lady in my life. She is way up, and the note must be way up, too, or she'll think me a muttonhead."

"Let me give you a pointer on that," said Scudder. "Just write a plain, simple, manly note of thanks for the flowers and her interest, and say you are entirely recovered from your strain of yesterday. That will be correct in every way. Don't gush. Leave that to dudes and fools."

Jack went to his landlady's daughter and borrowed an envelope and two sheets of paper. He then sat down at a table and wrote:

DEAR MISS MANDEVILLE: A thousand thanks for the flowers and your kindly interest. Both touch me deeply, and will ever be remembered. Thanks to the kind attention of the doctor and friends, I am feeling like myself again. These flowers

THE RIVAL NINES

7

and the note that came with them will complete the cure. Sincerely yours,

JACK MILLBANKE.

"There, how will that do?" he asked, showing the note to Tom and Scudder.

"It is just to the point," said Scudder, "and any girl would like it."

Jack sealed and addressed it, and then sent it down by Tom to be delivered to the messenger. He then placed the flowers in water, and the note in his trunk, to keep as a precious relic.

"Have you heard from Miss Ward, Jack?" Tom asked him, a few moments later.

"No. Why?"

"I was wondering if she, too, would congratulate you on beating her brother Berkeley's nine," Tom replied.

CHAPTER VI.—Jack in the Mill—The Second Game.

On the Monday morning after the great game Jack received an ovation from the mill hands as he entered the big establishment. He removed his hat and waved it above his head with the rest of them, and when quiet was restored sung out: "They can't beat the mill boys!"

That touched them off again, and the crowd nearly raised the roof with their shouts. But there was one stalwart young fellow in the crowd who did not cheer. His name was Dan Fallon. He was about 21 years old, and had once been a member of the Reds. But he was jealous of Jack, and left the team when the latter was elected captain. He worked within a few feet of Jack in the mill. During the morning, while both were at work, Dan said to the young captain:

"Jack, I want to ask you a question."

"Well, what is it?"

"Did those two young ladies whom you took out of the river give you their diamond rings? I heard a man say so last night, and I told him I didn't believe you would take anything for saving a girl from drowning. But he said it was true, and I told him I would find out from you. How about it?"

"It is true," Jack replied, "and it is also true that I refused to take them; but they would not let me off—they made me take them."

"Well, they couldn't have made me take anything for such an act," replied Dan, with a sneer.

"I believe you," retorted Jack. "You are not the man to risk your life for another. A bushel of diamond rings could not have tempted you."

"Do you mean to insult me?"

"I meant to reply to your question in the same spirit that prompted you to ask it," was the reply.

Dan was puzzled what to say or do. He did not quite understand the meaning of Jack's language, and so he again asked if he meant to insult him.

"See here, Dan," said Jack, "if you meant to insult me in the way you put that question, I most certainly meant to insult you in my reply. Now what did you intend?" Jack looked Dan full in the eyes as he put the question.

"I didn't mean to insult you," Dan replied.

"I think you did, and you have my reply. What are you going to do about it?"

"I'll let you know after work stops for the day."

The man who worked next to Dan heard what

passed between them. He was an ardent friend of the Reds, and believed that Fallon was trying to pick a fight with Jack for the purpose of disabling him so he could not play in the next game against the Grays. He went to the superintendent of the mill, and told him. The superintendent was enthusiastic over the game, and when he heard of the quarrel he sent for Dan to come to his office. Dan was surprised when he received the order to come to the office.

"See here, Dan," the superintendent said to him, "why have you picked a quarrel with Jack Millbanke?"

"He insulted me."

"Didn't you insult him first?"

"No."

"But didn't he think you did?"

"I don't know what he thought. I asked him a question, and he insulted me."

"Now, see here, Dan, you insulted Jack first, for he told you so. If you have any fight with him I'll see that you lose your job in this mill."

"Why are you interfering?" asked Dan.

"Because I think you are trying to prevent him from winning the ball games."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. Just wait till after the games are played, and you can fight it out with him."

"All right, I'll wait. But who told you of this?"

"Never mind. A half dozen heard the quarrel, and all agree that you were to blame."

"Well, I'll wait, just to show you that I didn't have any idea of interfering with the ball games," said Dan, as he left the office.

When Saturday came a big mob was at the field waiting for the game to start.

Again the band played for the Reds, and the wildest cheering greeted them as they appeared on the field. In the first inning the Grays went to the bat, and Henley to the pitcher's box. Jones was at the home plate, bat in hand. Tom gave him a dizzy curve, and he let it pass, as he did the second. He thrashed the air on the third, and the catcher caught the ball. He dropped his bat in disgust, and Miller took it up, and met the same fate. Scudder had been putting in some fine work coaching Tom, and his pupil did him justice. Ellis took his turn at the bat and sent a fly ball to Mix, and the Grays went to the field, not having made even a hit.

Fred Alden, the first batter up for the Reds, sent a hot grounder to left field, and sprinted to second amid wild yells from the audience. Mix sent the ball skyward, and was caught out by Miller. Turner sent the ball far out to right field, and Fred dashed for third, and scudded home amid a storm of yells. In the third inning each side scored one run, and in the fourth the Grays evened up with the Reds—three runs each—and it began to look as though another neck and neck game was going to be played. In the fifth and sixth innings the two teams kept even, and the excitement ran up to fever heat among the spectators. There were several appeals to the umpire, but he ruled impartially, and in strict conformity to the rules of the game, and everyone seemed satisfied. In the seventh inning Berkeley Ward smashed the ball to left. It was sent to second, where Jack nailed him when within a few inches of the plate.

"Out!" cried the umpire.

THE RIVAL NINES

"I touched the base before he had the ball!" exclaimed Ward indignantly.

"You're out," repeated the umpire.

"You are mistaken," cried young Ward, and bad blood began to show. Jack said nothing, for he looked up at the grandstand and saw Emory Ward's pale face, her eyes resting upon him with a strange expression in them.

"Play ball!" cried the umpire, and the game went on.

Neither side made a run. In the next inning Berkeley disputed with the umpire again about a decision. They were personal friends, but the umpire was just in every decision he made, and the mill people cheered him repeatedly. Berkeley was nervous, and the cool playing of the Reds rattled him.

"Jack Millbanke," he hissed at the young captain of the Reds, "you know well enough that I had my hand on that plate when you touched me with the ball."

"Indeed I do not. The umpire and nine out of every ten men in the crowd are against you."

"But none of them know the truth about it as you and I do."

"You are right, there," said Jack, "and that's why your claim astonishes me so much."

Just then Alden sent a ball to the outfield and was out, ending the inning. The ninth inning found the Grays at the bat, and the vast audience in a fever heat of excitement. Henley's curves made two of them dizzy, and the third was caught out. Mix and Alden of the Reds were quickly caught out, and then Jack went to the bat. He let the first and second balls pass, and smashed the third like a thunderbolt, sending it away out to left centre. He dashed to first, then to second and third, and seeing a bare chance to get home, dashed for the home plate. Half the spectators rose to their feet and held their breath. If he got home the game was won. Berkeley Ward sprang forward to catch the return throw and nail him. With both hands upraised to receive the ball, he stood directly in the path. Jack dived between his legs and slid over the plate, while Ward fell heavily to the ground and the ball passed on to the catcher.

CHAPTER VII.—The Disguised Pitcher for the Grays.

The yells of the vast crowd as Jack's hand touched the home plate was like Old Ocean's roar in a storm. It was a clean home run from start to finish. They did play, but nobody heard the music. The Reds took Jack on their shoulders and marched around the field with him, while the Grays assisted Berkeley Ward to his feet, as he was half stunned by his fall, and stood about the umpire, talking excitedly and gesticulating wildly. As he was being borne on the shoulders of the Reds, Jack looked up at the grandstand, and again met the gaze of Emory Ward. Her face was paler now than at the beginning of the game, and there was an expression on her face which he could not understand. Jesse Mandeville was by her side. She held a bouquet of red roses in her hand. Suddenly, as if unable to resist the wild impulse of the moment, she rose to her feet and threw the flowers at Jack. He caught them, and it was the signal for every girl who had any

flowers to cast them at him. It fairly rained flowers for a few minutes, and a cartload of them fell all about those who were bearing the young captain on their shoulders. Finally something like order was restored, and Berkeley Ward, who was a good deal the worse for his fall, raised his voice and called out:

"I demand judgment. I would have caught the ball and nailed him had he not thrown me."

"You interfered with the runner by standing on the base line," replied the umpire.

The crowd yelled again.

"You have ruled against me in both games!" exclaimed Ward angrily.

"Had I done otherwise it would have been so unjust that the crowd would have mobbed me," the umpire replied. "I would have been justified in fining you heavily at one stage of the game. As an umpire, I have no personal friendships, Berkeley Ward."

Berkeley turned away, and the Grays began to leave the field. They were stung to the quick by the floral tributes showered upon Jack Millbanke, and felt very bitter against everybody. True, it had been a close game, like the first one, but in each one Jack had turned the tide and saved his team from defeat, and the umpire had to settle a disputed point in his favor. Berkeley went home in his father's carriage with his mother and sister. He was angry, and said some hard things against the umpire.

"Did he decide unjustly?" his father asked.

"I think he did," replied young Ward.

"The crowd was unanimous against you. You were on the base line."

"Just on the edge of it."

"Well, the less you say about it the better it will be for you. Public opinion is a hard thing to pull against."

Young Ward said no more. He was too much upset to even think right. He went home, took a bath, and went to bed.

"We'll settle 'em in the next game, best three in five," said Scudder to the Reds as they met at the Lawrence Hotel in the evening.

"I thought but three games were to be played," said a stranger standing near.

"That was the original understanding," said Henley, "but it was changed to best three in five."

The stranger turned away, and entered into conversation with a man who was a most ardent backer of the Grays.

"Who is that?" asked Fred Alden.

"Hanged if I know," replied one of the Reds.

"Well, I know him," said Scudder in a half whisper. "He is the famous pitcher of the Chicago team. He is disguised, but I recognized his voice. His name is Hadley. I'm glad he didn't recognize me."

"What's he doing here?" Tom asked.

"Tell me, and I'll whisper it to you," Scudder replied.

"Well, I'll bet he's here to coach St. Clair for the Grays," remarked Fred Alden.

"I won't copper the bet," said Scudder, shaking his head.

"Is he a good one?" asked a member of the Reds.

"First-class," was the reply, "but I know all his curves."

"But we don't," replied Tom.

"No, but you will, in another week. I'll see to that."

"That means plenty of hard work, then."

"Yes, it does."

In a little while St. Clair of the Grays came in and joined the stranger.

CHAPTER VIII.—Jack Millbanke Makes a Promise.

Scudder was a wily schemer. He had some enemies in the National League, whom he was bound to punish, and Hadley, the famous pitcher of the Chicagoos, was one of them. The latter had been an active enemy of his in the three preceding seasons, and when made the discovery of the Chicago pitcher's identity, Scudder jumped to the conclusion that he had been sent for by the Grays after their first defeat.

"Ah, my fine bird," Scudder muttered, "I'll give you dead away, but I'll find out what name you have assumed first."

He went to the hotel clerk and asked if the man St. Clair was talking to was a guest of the hotel. The clerk looked at the stranger for a minute or two, and then pointed to a name on the register—Charles Rogers, St. Louis. Meeting Fred Alden again, Scudder said:

"Show me a reporter, and I'll give him a pointer that will make the Grays sick."

"All right—there goes a reporter now," and Fred stopped the newspaper man and led him aside. Scudder gave him the story, and the next day the paper stated that the Grays were so badly rattled that they had secretly secured Hadley, the great Chicago pitcher, to come to their assistance, and that he was then registered at the Lawrence Hotel under the name of Charley Rogers of St. Louis, and was also disguised; and the added information that he had been in consultation with the Grays the night before at the hotel.

Naturally, the publication of this piece of news created great excitement among the lovers of the game in the city. The Reds laughed and shook hands with everybody, and the Grays were mad enough to fight. Sunday though it was, the hotel was crowded all day by people eager to get a glimpse of the disguised pitcher. Hadley was disgusted. He paid his bill and left the hotel, going to New York to get another disguise. St. Clair denied that he had seen Hadley. He had talked with Rogers, he said, who was an old acquaintance of his, and that was all.

"Somebody has made a big mistake," he said, "or else put up a job on the reporter."

The reporter sought out Fred Alden again and questioned him about it.

"It is the truth. I know Scudder, and he knows Hadley," said Fred. "Why did Rogers skip out of town as soon as the paper exposed him, if it wasn't true?"

The paper stuck to the story in its next issue, and the Grays stuck to their denial of its truth. Scudder walked all around the grounds, in search of a knothole in the big fence through which to peep at the Grays doing their practicing.

"Ah, there, Hadley!" he said to himself, as he saw the coacher giving lessons to St. Clair in the art of sending curved balls over the home plate. "I am on to your curves and all your twists. I

don't know your new name under that beard, but I know every joint in your frame, my lad." Then he turned away, and was on hand at the mill yard at six o'clock when the Reds came out to practice.

The next day the paper stated that Hadley, the Chicago pitcher, in a new disguise, was coaching the Grays at their ball grounds the preceding afternoon. That evening Tom Henley and Jack Millbanke entered the Lawrence Hotel, and the young captain of the Reds was instantly recognized and surrounded by a crowd of admirers. Berkeley Ward pushed forward and asked:

"Have you a spy to watch our movements, Jack Millbanke?"

"No," replied Jack.

"Well, it seems that somebody is spying on us."

"Maybe it is newspaper enterprise," said Jack.

"It looks more like baseball enterprise," sneered Ward.

"It seems that baseball enterprise is something very much needed in some quarters," Jack retorted.

The crowd laughed, and Ward lost his temper.

"Jack Millbanke, you're a contemptible cur!" he hissed.

"Do you mean that?"

"I do."

Jack sprang at him, but he was instantly seized and held by those about him. Ward was led away by one of his personal friends, who said to him:

"The Grays ought to throw you out, Ward. You lose your head too easily. Jack would have pummeled you to a jelly if his friends had not held him back."

Ward went away, and Jack remained at the hotel for an hour or so, and then went home. Of course the news of the encounter between the two baseball captains spread throughout the city. When Jack went home the following evening he found a note awaiting him. It had come by mail. He opened it and read:

My Dear Friend: I owe you my life, which you saved at the risk of your own, and the sense of the obligation will never leave me. I am sure that one with the chivalrous nobility of soul you possess would never let one appeal to him in vain. It is with the deepest humiliation that I find my brother an enemy of yours, and that on the very slightest provocation he would attack you. May I appeal to your generous manhood to avoid a collision with him as far as your sense of right will permit you? Oh, if my brother should so far forget himself as to strike a man who saved my life I believe I would not care to live and face the world again! Oh, let me hope that I do not appeal in vain!

Truly and sincerely your friend,
EMORY WARD.

"By George!" exclaimed Jack, when he had finished reading the note, "this is tough on me. I shall have to take a good deal from him for her sake. I appreciate her feelings. She is a sweet girl, and a good one, too. This letter must be kept a secret, but I must answer it."

My Dear Miss Ward: In reply to your kind note, I would say that as far as my powers of self-control will sustain me, your wishes shall be my law. I have no ill feeling toward your brother,

THE RIVAL NINES

but for some unknown cause he seems to entertain a deadly hatred toward me.

Most respectfully,
JACK MILLBANKE.

He mailed it that evening, and the next morning Miss Ward received it at her home. Its perusal made her very happy, but in returning it to the envelope she unconsciously let the letter fall to the floor. When she had returned to her room Berkeley happened to see it on the floor, and picking it up, read it. He grew livid with rage. He did not let any of the family know he had seen the letter. He denied having found it when his sister came downstairs to look for it, and soon afterward left the house.

CHAPTER IX.—Berkeley Ward Takes Advantage of Jack's Promise and Gets Punished.

That evening he saw St. Clair at the Lawrence Club House, and had a talk with him. St. Clair told him that he was going out of town every morning with Hadley to take lessons in pitching.

"I can't stand this constant nagging of the press and people," he added. "Hadley is puzzled over the matter of his betrayal or discovery, and says we must have a traitor on our team. I told him that was impossible, as our boys hated the Reds, and would give big money to beat them."

"I think they have spies or detectives after us all the time. That fellow Millbanke is capable of doing such things. He is a sneak and a coward!" and Ward was quite emphatic in his tone.

"I don't agree with you there, Ward," said St. Clair. "I think Millbanke is a square fellow."

"Bah!"

"Well, at any rate, he is gaining a fine reputation in the city. On the other hand, I have heard some very hard things said about you right here in this club in regard to your treatment of him."

Ward's face flushed, as he asked:

"Who are they, and what did they say?"

"I shall give no names, but if you wish to know what they said I can tell you."

"Oh, I don't care to know what was said unless I know who said it."

"Very well, I shall say no more, then."

"See here, Henry, I always thought that you were a friend of mine?"

"So I am, and that is why I am sorry to see you show traits I did not believe you possessed."

"Why, what is the matter with me?"

"Well, if a man saved my sister's life, I'd cut my tongue out ere I would let it say aught against him."

"You ought to have been born a girl, Henry," laughed Ward. "You are full of romantic ideas."

"Well, maybe I am, but I hope I have some manly ideas, too."

"Oh, well, we won't quarrel about it. I don't like Jack Millbanke, and couldn't if I wanted to. He is a good swimmer, so it was nothing for him to get the girls out of the water, and the Lord knows he was well paid for it. Those two rings are worth more money than he can earn in a year. Where is Hadley?"

"Out in the country. I am going out to see him in the morning. In the afternoon I'll be on the club grounds to give the team the benefit of my lessons."

"Where is Miller? Have you seen him tonight?"

"He was here a while ago. I think he is at the Lawrence Hotel."

"I'll go over and see him." And with a handshake, Ward left his friend and made his way over to the hotel. Miller was there, and so were Jack Millbanke and Tom Henley.

Just as young Ward passed Jack, the latter said to a friend:

"No, I don't know Hadley, have never seen him, and really don't know whether he is here or not."

Ward wheeled around and said:

"You don't know anything about it, of course, but you are the source of all the lies that have been published in regard to it."

"You are mistaken," said Jack, coolly. "You seem very anxious to quarrel with me, but I don't intend to gratify you. I prefer to meet you in a ball game."

"That is the excuse of cowardice! You are a sneak and a coward, Jack Millbanke!"

Tom Henley looked at Jack, and saw his face turn pale, but the young iron worker made no move to resent the insult.

"Are you going to stand that, Jack?" asked Tom.

"Tom, I am under a solemn promise not to fight him, at least for the present."

"Bah!" sneered Ward.

"Well, I am under no such promise. I'll take your place," said Tom. And with that he turned toward Ward and said:

"Defend yourself!"

Before a blow could be struck, both of the young men were seized by friends.

Miller told St. Clair what had happened at the hotel.

"What a pity they did not let Henley thrash him!" St. Clair remarked. "I never saw a man who needs a good thrashing more than he does. Now he has got to fight Henley, or be considered a coward. Those Reds are not the boys to fool with, and I have told him that repeatedly."

Berkeley was sitting near a window, talking to some friends, when a club attendant came to him and said:

"There is a man in the office downstairs who wishes to see you, sir."

"Who is he?" asked Berkeley.

"He didn't give any name, sir."

"Well, go down and get his name."

The attendant went downstairs, but came back in a few minutes, saying:

"He will not give his name. Says you don't know him, but that he has important business with you."

"Guess he bears a challenge," said Miller in an undertone. "Go down and see who he is, and I'll follow."

Ward arose and strolled leisurely downstairs to the little office of the club house, and there saw a very muscular-looking young man seated in a corner of the room, eyeing him furtively.

CHAPTER X.—Bad Blood.

The two men eyed each other in silence for a minute or two, and then the attendant said to Berkeley

"That is the gentleman," and pointed toward the young man.

Berkeley went up to him and asked:

"Did you wish to see me?"

"If you are Berkeley Ward—yes."

"That is my name."

"I want to have a private talk with you."

"What about?"

"The baseball game you have on hand with the Reds."

Berkeley looked at him as if trying to fathom his motives and finally asked:

"What do you wish to do?"

"I wish to help you with the game."

Berkeley started.

"Can you do it?" he asked.

"I think I can."

"Well, come this way," and Ward led him into another room. They sat down near a corner, and spoke in whispers for half an hour or more, and then separated.

The strangers went away, and Berkeley rejoined Miller up stairs.

"Was it a challenge?" Miller asked.

"No. It was another matter altogether."

"I noticed that you seemed to feel relieved after a few words had passed between you."

Miller remarked.

"Bah! I am not afraid of my shadow."

Miller asked no further questions about the stranger, and Berkeley did not volunteer any information. They were talking quietly together when two members of the club came up and saluted them. One of them said, addressing Ward:

"We have just come from the Lawrence Hotel, Berkeley, and everybody there was wondering what you were going to do about Henley's act tonight."

"There isn't but one thing for me to do," replied Ward.

"That's what they all say."

"I am going to thrash him when I meet him again."

"Why not have him arrested?" the second man asked.

"That would ruin me," Ward replied.

"Well, you might be ruined if you tackle that young iron worker."

"Perhaps, but my reputation would be saved."

"For gameness, yes; but a good many people would say you lacked gray matter."

"Well, you can't prevent people talking, you know."

"There are two ways of preventing them from talking about you, though—kill them, or else do nothing that we can talk about."

"To whom has he made such a promise, and why did he make it?" everybody asked.

A sporting man who had backed the Reds suggested that certain parties were backing Jack's nine on condition that he played in each game, and kept out of trouble till the last game was played.

That seemed so reasonable that nearly everybody believed it to be the case.

At the mill, Jack had a hard time of it, for the rough fellows there thought he ought to have downed Ward when he was insulted by him.

"It is the queerest excuse ever invented to keep out of a fight," said Dan Fallon.

"But it was not invented," said another. "I

don't believe Jack is a coward, or that you believe it, either."

That was the talk all through the mill where Jack worked. All were loud in Tom Henley's praise, though, and many were even astonished at his terrible earnestness in forcing Ward to fight him.

"This trouble between Millbanke and Ward is unfortunate," he said to the other members of the nine. "It has turned public opinion against us to a certain extent, as we are all supposed to be behind our captain in what he does. I say to you now that if he gets into a fight with Jack Millbanke before these games end I shall quit the Grays at once."

They went to Ward and told him that St. Clair had said, and insisted on his dropping his quarrel for the present.

He agreed to do so, and the practicing went on.

But that evening he and Tom Henley met face to face on the street, in front of the club house. Tom stopped and looked Ward full in the face, but the latter passed on and entered the club house.

"That settles it," said Tom to himself. "He doesn't mean to fight, unless it is to slug me in the dark."

On the evening of the day before the third game was to be played, Jack was returning to his home when a carriage was driven up close to the curb and a girlish voice cried out:

"Mr. Millbanke!"

Jack turned and looked, and was surprised to see Jessie Mandeville and Emory Ward smiling at him.

Taking off his hat he went up to them.

They both extended their hands to him.

"Pardon me, ladies," he said, "I have just left the mill, and—and—"

"Oh, never mind if your hands are dirty," said Jessie, laughing. "The Bible says we are made of dirt."

"Oh, no" he replied, laughing, too. "Only one man was made out of dirt, and he was a dirty fellow, who laid the blame on the woman."

The two girls laughed merrily as they shook hands with him.

"I don't believe you would have done that," said Emory.

"I don't either," he replied. "I'd have carried the woman's sin every time."

"Well, you carried a heavy load for me when Berkeley insulted you so the other evening, and I drove out here to meet and thank you. It showed a brave heart to do as you did just to oblige a sister of your enemy."

"Oh! Isn't that a compliment?" exclaimed Jessie.

"Yes, indeed, Oh! Here comes Berkeley and Mr. Ellis on horseback!"

Two young men, mounted on fine horses, came rapidly toward them.

"Well, what of it?" Jessie asked, as she looked back at the two horsemen. "I am sure it is no business of theirs what we do."

CHAPTER XI.—The Third Game and How It Ended.

Berkeley Ward turned pale as death when he saw his sweetheart ignoring his presence and giving all her smiles to the common mill hand, who

stood there in the clothes he had worked in during the day. He stood it but a few minutes, and then turned and galloped down the street, followed by his companion.

"Now we'll leave you. Mr. Millbanke," said Jessie, extending her hand to Jack. "I am going to call on Mrs. Adams on Monday evening. Will you be there?"

"I shall try to be there," Jack replied. "And you, Miss Ward—will you be there, too?"

"No, I have an engagement for that evening, but I shall send a message and call a day or two later."

"I am sure my aunt will be glad to see both of you," said Jack, stepping back, and lifting his hat to them as the carriage drove away.

"They are beautiful girls," he said to himself as he gazed after the carriage. "Jessie gave him a snub, and now he is a desperate man. Well, if I had money to hold my own in life with him, I'd cut him out, if I could. I guess she is angry with him about something."

He reached home, and ate supper, feeling quite happy over the meeting with the two girls. His mother felt proud of the fact that they had taken the trouble to see him, and his sister, a comely girl of sixteen, said she would like to be at her aunt's home to meet Miss Mandeville on Monday evening.

"Go over and take supper there," said Jack, "and I'll fetch you home. I am sure she will like you, Dora."

"I hope she will," replied Dora.

On the day when the next game was to be played a large crowd as usual was on hand.

The band was again with the Reds. The proprietor of the mill where Jack worked had ordered the band out each time to show his interest in his employees.

This time he was on the field himself to see the game.

"Jack, Miss Mandeville has the silk banner with her to present to us if we win to-day," said Joe Mix to Millbanke, as soon as they entered the grounds. "You had better have your speech ready."

"By George! I can't make a speech!" Jack had a scared look on his face. "I never once thought about that! Hanged if I don't resign!"

"Bosh!" said Joe, laughing.

"How do you know she has it with her?" Jack asked.

"I can see it in her hand now. She has about the same seat she had last Saturday."

Jack looked for her, and soon found her. She smiled, and partly held up the beautiful silk pennant.

The umpire called the game, and the Reds went to the bat, Joe Mix being the first batter up.

St. Clair tossed him a dizzy one, and he let it pass, but he smashed the second one straight into the hands of Miller.

Fred Alden thrashed the air, and the ball rested in the catcher's maylies. Phil Dodd sent up a high fly, which the left fielder took care of.

Ellis of the Grays went to the bat, and Henley staggered him with his gyrations. The batter let one pass, and whiffed on the other two. Jones fared the same, but Miller smashed the ball to right and got to first, where he was left.

The eighth found them still even, with one more

to the score of each, and the ninth opened with Jack himself at the bat. He smashed the sphere to right center, and got to first. Alden helped him to second getting to first himself.

"Here, Jack!" called a girlish voice. "Wear this home!" And a small bouquet of roses came through the air, landing at the young captain's feet.

He picked it up and pressed it to his face to inhale its fragrance. After smelling of the flowers a few times he stuck them into the pocket of his red shirt, just over his heart, and kept on the alert for a dash for home.

Mix smashed the ball to right, and Jack raced for third at top speed. As he passed the bag he was seen to stagger, and when half way toward the home plate dropped to his knees and rolled over on his side.

A cry of horror went up from the crowd, and a rush was made for the unconscious player.

"Back! Back!" cried Berkeley Ward to those outsiders who had come on the field. And then to the umpire:

"We are interfered with."

The police soon cleared the field, and when Jack was picked up he was found to be unconscious. A call for a physician brought two to the spot.

"He has been drugged!" said both in a breath.

One of them took up the very much crumpled bouquet and held it to his nose.

"Ah! Smell that!" he said, holding the flowers to the nose of the other physician.

"You're right. He has been drugged," said the second medical man.

Tom Henley heard what they said and sprang out into the field, crying:

"Arrest the girl who threw that bouquet to Jack! It was drugged!"

A cry of astonishment burst from the audience. Those who saw the girl noticed that she wore a veil, and she had disappeared in the confusion of the moment.

CHAPTER XII.—The Red-Haired Man.

The Grays had won the game by one run, but it was not a victory they could rejoice over. They stood around the spot where the doctors were at work on Jack till the ambulance came and took him to the hospital.

Tom Henley went up to Berkeley Ward and asked:

"Are you going to claim this game?"

"I have nothing to say to you until the fifth game is over, and then it will be a fight to a finish," said Ward.

"Glad to hear you say that," said Tom. "But how much did you pay for this little job?"

"What job?"

"Those drugged flowers."

"Oh, I've got nothing to say. I am not given to that sort of thing."

"I think you are, and am willing to stake my life that when the truth is known you will be found to be at the bottom of it."

Berkeley turned with a contemptuous sneer on his face.

"See here, Henley," said St. Clair, "let's have fair play. I am not willing to rest under the accusation that our nine could be guilty of a foul deed like that, and you must not make it."

"I know you to be an honorable man, Henry St. Clair," Tom replied. "I would not think of accusing any of you, but Berkeley Ward, I believe him to be capable of doing anything mean and sneaking."

"I would advise you to go slow in accusing anybody. Wait, and see what can be found out about it."

"The umpire decides for us," said Miller, coming up at that moment.

"He had better call it off," said Tom.

He was turning away when a boy came up to him.

"A lady told me to tell you to come to her at once."

"Where is she?"

"In her carriage."

"Show me the carriage."

"Come on," said the boy.

Tom followed him, and was taken to the Mandeville carriage.

"Oh, Mr. Henley!" exclaimed Jessie Mandeville. "Tell us what has happened."

He looked into the carriage, and saw Emory Ward, pale as death, leaning back in her seat, as if almost overcome.

"Jack has been drugged by a bouquet of flowers thrown to him," said Tom.

"Is he dead?" Emory asked in a hollow voice.

"No."

"Will he die?"

"Not now, I hope."

"Who—did—it?"

"I don't know," said Tom, shaking his head.

"Get in here with us, please, and drive home," and Jessie made room for him by her side.

He got in, and the carriage drove off.

"It is terrible!" said Jessie.

"Yes," assented Tom.

"Do you suspect any one?"

"Jack has a few enemies," he replied.

"But do you suspect any one?" persisted Jessie. Tom glanced at Emory. Her eyes were riveted upon him, and seemed to say: "If you accuse my brother, I shall die!"

"I think it was done at the instigation of gamblers, who feared the loss of their money," he replied.

"No, but I heard her voice."

"So did I; but her back was toward me. She got up and moved away as soon as she threw it."

"Of course."

"They may catch her."

"I hope so."

"There was a man with her," said Emory, speaking for the first time since Tom had entered the carriage.

"Did you see his face?" Tom asked.

"Yes."

"Would you know him again?"

"Yes. He is young—not more than twenty, I think, and looks like a mill hand."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. He is a blond, freckled, and has red hair."

"I know that man!" gasped Tom.

"You do?" cried Jessie.

"Yes. He works in the same shop, and not ten feet from Jack."

"Are they enemies?"

"Bitter enemies."

"Oh! I am so glad!" And Emory Ward buried her face in her hands and burst into tears.

"I am, too—for your sake, Miss Ward," said Tom. "I—I appreciate your feelings as a sister. You are a true woman, and I—"

Jessie caught Emory in her arms and kissed her, saying:

"There, there, dear! Don't cry any more. It will make your eyes red. I am glad Berkeley has escaped such a terrible accusation."

"Don't say anything about it to any one till I tell you," said Tom. "I'll put detectives after him at once. But, Miss Ward, I did tell your brother I believed he was at the bottom of it just before I left the field. Please tell him I take it back and beg his pardon."

"That's manly of you, Tom Henley!" exclaimed Jessie Mandeville, "for I know you and Berkeley have a quarrel on hand."

"Thank you, Miss Mandeville. I would not knowingly do another a wrong."

"Will you promise me not to fight Berkeley?" asked Emory

"Don't ask me!" he exclaimed.

"But I do ask you."

"I am in honor bound to fight him when he demands satisfaction, but I will promise you not to seek a fight with him."

"That will do—you could not promise more," said Jessie.

"I don't think I could, either," said Tom.

"I am satisfied, and I thank you," said Emory.

"Did Jack make you such a promise?" Tom asked.

"Yes, and he kept it."

"Yes, but it was hard work."

The carriage drove on, and passed thousands of people on their way back to the city from the ball grounds.

Emory had just dried her eyes, and was looking out at the people they were passing, when she suddenly explained:

"There he is! There he is!"

"Who asked Tom."

"The man who was with the girl—that red-haired man! Stop the carriage!"

CHAPTER XIII.—A Foul Game.

The carriage came to a sudden halt, and Emory Ward sprang out.

Tom followed her, saying:

"Be careful, Miss Ward. Don't make a scene, and get your name into the papers."

"But I want to save my brother from the suspicion that he had anything to do with drugging Jack Millbanke," she replied.

"There is no need of your saying a word to the fellow," said Tom. "I know him, and so does Jack. But do you see the girl anywhere?"

Emory shook her head.

"Let us follow him, and see if he joins her," she suggested.

"That is a good idea. I'll tell Miss Mandeville that we shall walk some distance," said Tom, and going back to the carriage he told Jessie of their intentions.

"I'll follow with the carriage, and keep both of you in sight," said Jessie, and she instructed the coachman accordingly.

THE RIVAL NINES

Tom then rejoined Emory, and the two hurried to overtake the red-haired man and shadow him. She took his arm, and they talked as they hurried along.

"You really know him?" she asked.

"Yes. His name is Fallon. He once belonged to our nine, but left it when Jack was elected captain. He hates Jack, and has been trying to pick a fight with him for some time."

"Is Jack afraid of him?"

"No. Jack is afraid of no man."

"How is it they don't fight, then?"

"Because Jack won't fight until these games are ended, unless he is attacked."

"He has a wonderful amount of self-control, it seems."

"Yes. Much more than I have."

Just then Emory gave a start and clutched Tom's arm, saying:

"Oh! I believe that is she—that girl who has just joined him."

"She was waiting there for him, no doubt," Tom remarked, as a young woman, with a thick veil over her face, joined Dan Fallon on the street. "Are you sure she is the one?"

"Yes," replied Emory.

"Well, we'll follow, and see where they will lead us."

"Oh, how could she have done such a thing?"

"There are some very wicked, heartless women in the world," Tom remarked.

"Yes, and men, too."

"True—more men than women. Ah! They are going into that saloon there!"

"We can't very well follow them in there," said Emory.

"No, not unless you had on a veil that would conceal your face."

She looked him full in the face as she asked:

"Would it be safe for me to do that?"

"Yes, perfectly."

"Then I'll get a veil. There's a little store over the way, come on."

She actually ran across the street, rushed into the little store, and asked to see some veils. She was shown some, and inside of three minutes came out again, so well veiled that Tom himself did not know her until she spoke to him.

"Now we can go in and watch them," she said, and they went into the saloon, which proved to be one much frequented by both sexes, and took their seats at a small table, from whence they could see all that was going on in the place.

Fallon and his unknown companion were seated at a table, drinking beer, and evidently waiting for some one to come in. A waiter came up to Tom, and asked what he would have to drink.

"Will you have a lemonade?" Tom asked of Emory.

"If you please," she replied.

"Bring two," Tom said, and the waiter went away to get them. Ere he returned, Emory clutched Tom's arm, and whispered:

"Oh! There comes Berkeley!"

Tom looked around, and saw the captain of the Grays passing around the tables, as if in search of some one.

"Keep perfectly still," Tom said to Emory. "He won't speak to me, and he can't recognize you behind that veil. Ah! He has gone to Fallon's table. He seems to know him. Shakes hands with him—

and the girl too! Sit down—don't get excited."

Emory had risen to her feet, in order to get a better view of what took place at the other table. Tom had to pull her down into her seat again.

A second round of beer was ordered, and that included one for Ward. He drank with them, and when he had paid for the drinks he was seen to hand a roll of bills to the young woman. She looked them over, as if to see that a certain sum was there, and then put them into her handbag.

Emory Ward saw the whole transaction, and turning to Tom said:

"Berkeley hired that woman to throw that bouquet of flowers to Jack, and has just paid her for doing so."

"It looks that way," said Tom, "but I am loath to believe he would do such a thing, though I am no friend of his."

"I cannot doubt it, myself," replied Emory. "I am ready to go now," rising to her feet as she spoke.

Berkeley Ward turned and looked in that direction, and recognized Tom. Instantly he drew his hat down over his face so as to avoid being recognized himself.

Emory observed the act, and stood looking at her brother, knowing that he could not recognize her, veiled as she was. Ward wondered who she was, and why she looked at him so intently. She finally passed out of the saloon with Tom.

Jessie waited in her carriage for her, two blocks away, and as Emory seated herself by her side she asked:

"Why did you get a veil, dear?"

"I wished to avoid being recognized."

"Did you find out anything?"

"Yes. A good deal."

Tom bowed, raised his hat, and hurried back to the saloon where he had left the conspirators. They were still there, and Tom made up his mind to find out who the girl was and where she lived.

He saw a young man about his own age on the sidewalk in front of the saloon, and going up to him asked if he was open for an engagement to do a little detective work.

"Yes. What is it?" was the reply.

"There is a girl in there, talking to two fellows, at a table over in the corner on the left. Go in, take a seat near enough to see and hear all that goes on, and also find out where she lives and her name. Here's a dollar. When you find out all about her I'll give you four more right here tomorrow evening at this hour," and he handed him a dollar as he spoke.

"Don't give yourself away. See how well you can do the job without letting any one know what you are up to."

CHAPTER XIV.—A Friend in Need.

The bustling little city of Lawrence was the center of intense excitement all day Sunday, after the third game of the series between the Reds and Grays. The sudden collapse of Jack Millbanke, and the ending of the game in favor of the Grays, was the one theme of conversation among all classes of citizens.

That Jack had been drugged no one could question. Thousands saw him take up the bouquet of roses and hold them to his nose to inhale their

fragrance. It was known, too, that a young woman with a thick veil over her face had thrown the bouquet to him, and had immediately disappeared.

But every member of the Grays, with the exception of St. Clair, claimed that the game was fairly won, and insisted on its being counted in their favor.

In the meantime, every one wanted to know how Jack Millbanke was getting along.

The doctors had labored with him all night, and not until the next morning did they succeed in bringing him out of the stupor into which the subtle drug had thrown him.

Tom Henley and Dora Millbanke were in the office of the hospital, waiting for news of his condition, when a carriage drove up at the gate, and Miss Mandeville descended from it. She entered the office, handed her card to the young doctor in charge, and asked for news of Jack.

"He is out of danger," was the reply. "Will you have a seat?"

"Thank you," she replied, taking the proffered chair. But the next moment she saw Tom, and sprang to her feet, exclaiming:

"Oh, Mr. Henley! I am so glad to meet you here!" she cried, shaking hands with him. "Have you heard how he is?"

"They say he is out of danger," Tom replied. "This is his sister Dora."

"Oh, I am so glad to meet you!" exclaimed Jessie, kissing her. "I am Jessie Mandeville, and I owe my life to your brother, you know." Sitting down by the side of Dora, she began talking to her in a way that made the young girl feel at ease.

Suddenly she turned to Tom and asked:

"Did you find out anything last night about—"

"Not, yet," he replied, before she could finish her sentence. "I hired a young fellow to follow them, because they know me, and I am to meet him at sunset to-day and get his report."

"But that will cost you something," she said. "Yes, five dollars."

"Of course you must let me pay it, and other expenses that may be incurred."

Tom still insisted that he would pay.

"You will not," said Jessie. "I will have my way."

When he finally yielded she said:

"If it becomes necessary, hire the best detectives, and put them to work, and I will pay the bill. I am going to stand by Jack Millbanke to my last dollar. My dear, you look very much like Jack," she said to Dora.

"Yes," replied Dora. "We do resemble each other some-what."

"Oh, if I only had such a brother!"

Just then a young doctor came in to say that Jack was conscious and wanted to see Mr. Henley.

"That's my name," said Tom, rising.

"Tom, tell him his sister is here," said Jessie, as Tom went out with the doctor.

Tom found Jack in a half-dazed condition.

"Well, how do you feel?" asked Tom.

"I feel queer. What has happened?"

Tom told him in as few words as possible, and that he had a clue to the woman who threw the bouquet of roses to him.

"Do the Grays claim the game, Tom?"

"The umpire awarded it to them a moment or two after you fell."

"What does she think of it?" Jack asked, after a pause.

"Who?"

"Miss Mandeville—or have you seen her since the game?"

"Jack, she and Dora are downstairs together. She is our friend, and insists on paying all the expenses of clearing up the mystery of the affair."

"I would like to see her and Dora, if they would come up."

"I know they want to come," Tom remarked, and he went to obtain permission for them to do so. They were admitted to his ward, and when Dora saw him she threw herself on his bosom and wept.

"I am glad to see you are out of danger," said Jessie, as she shook hands with him. It was a cowardly and mean act, and I hope the guilty ones will be caught and punished."

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart, Miss Mandeville," Jack replied. "I shall never forget your kindness and the honor of this visit. Tom says the guilty ones will be caught, and when they are they shall receive the severest penalty of the law."

"Jack, my father's lawyer is the best in the city," said Jessie. "Let me send him to see you. I wish to bear the expense of the prosecution myself. I am rich, and am involved in this somewhat, as I offered a silk pennant to the Lawrence champions and a gold badge to the captain of the winning team."

"I thank you, but I am able to pay my own lawyer," said Jack.

Later in the day, a little before sunset, Tom repaired to the saloon to keep his appointment with the youth who had agreed to shadow the young woman with Dan Fallon. The youth was waiting for him, and proceeded at once to tell his story.

CHAPTER XV.—Brother and Sister.

"I sat there and watched them for half an hour," the youth told Tom. "They talked in such low tones I could not hear a word. By and by the man with the black eyes shook hands with the red-haired man and the woman and went away, leaving them there at the table. They had another round of beer, whispered together for a few minutes, and then got up to leave.

"I strolled out after them, and followed them down to Burton Street, where he left her at the door of 117, and went away. I entered a saloon on the corner, a few doors away. There I got talking with a chap I met there. I soon found out that the family in 117 was a mighty hard crowd by the name of West, that the girl was Sallie West, and that she had a brother who was doing time for the State for burglary."

"That is enough. You have done well," said Tom. "Here are the four dollars I promised you. Just keep dark about this and there may be more money in it for you."

"What is your name, and where can you be found?" asked the youth as he took the money.

Tom told him, and took his address in return, after which they parted. Tom then hurried away

to see the chief of police and lay the matter before him. That official advised him to swear out warrants for the arrest of the parties, first seeking legal advice. Tom waited till Monday, and then consulted with Jack, who went with him to see Judge Greene, who was Banker Mandeville's lawyer.

"Miss Mandeville has already retained me as your counsel," the judge said, on hearing Jack's name. "Take a seat and tell me all about it."

He was soon in possession of the facts, and at once proceeded to have a warrant issued for the arrest of the West girl. On Monday night she was arrested and locked up, while Jack was on a visit to his aunt, Mrs. Adams. When he went to work on Monday, Jack kept his eye on Fallon, whose place was but a few paces from his own. Fallon did not have a word to say to anyone about the game on Saturday, although that was the sole topic during the day among the rest of the mill men.

"Whoever did it ought to be drowned in a bag like a cat," said a brawny ironworker in Fallon's hearing.

"Yes, and I'd like to help do it," said a dozen others.

"I can't believe any of the Grays had anything to do with it," said another. "It must have been some sneak who had long odds in the betting, and wanted to make sure of the game."

"Tom says they are after the woman—that she is known, and will soon be arrested."

Fallon listened, but did not say a word, keeping steadily at his work. On Tuesday morning Fallon did not show up at the mill. He had heard of the arrest of the West woman, and was frightened. She denied throwing the bouquet, and the testimony against her was held back till the court could meet, and call for it. By the middle of the week Jack was himself again, and had publicly stated that he was going to play the fourth game on the following Saturday. In the meantime, Emory Ward had worried herself into a fever over the peril that threatened her brother. One day, when they were alone together, she said to him:

"Berkeley, you should not have done that."

"Done what?"

"Hired that woman to throw that bouquet to Jack Millbanke."

"I did not," he gasped.

"Who has been giving you all this stuff, Emory?"

"Isn't it true?" she asked.

"Not a word of it!"

"You did not meet the woman in a saloon and give her money?"

"No."

"You did not see Tom Henley there, with a lady with a thick veil over her face, just as they were going out?"

"No," replied Berkeley, though his face was ashed hued.

"Berkeley, I was with Tom Henley, and saw you myself."

Her brother reeled and staggered like a drunken man. It was a crushing blow.

"But you—you won't swear against me?" he groaned, utterly broken up by the knowledge that she knew the truth.

"No; but Henley knows all, and if I am called to sustain his evidence I shall tell the truth. You

had better try to settle the matter and save yourself."

Ward reeled out of the room and made his way to his own apartment, where he opened his trunk, took out a revolver, stood before the glass of his dressing-case, and slowly placed the muzzle of the weapon against his right temple.

CHAPTER XVI.—Almost a Tragedy—Both Sides of the Story.

Berkeley Ward gazed straight at his reflection in the mirror and pulled the trigger. It failed to explode, and a terribly sickening revulsion of feeling came over him. Every fiber of his mental and physical make-up seemed to revolt at the attempt to destroy himself. He staggered to his bed and fell across it, lying there in a half stupor for an hour or more, still clutching the revolver in his hand. No one came up to his room to interrupt him, so when he arose from the bed and saw his reflection in the mirror the greater part of his impulsive desperation had left him. In his cooler moments he was far from being a brave man. He had not the courage to destroy himself, hence he put away the revolver and sat down to think over what was best for him to do.

"I must see Fallon, and get him to leave town," he said to himself. "What a fool I was to meet them there in that saloon! But Emory will not say anything to incriminate me, and she won't be believed on her own uncorroborated story. If she sticks to her denial they can't prove anything by her."

He bathed his face, took a drink of brandy to brace up, and then went downstairs and passed out of the house, without having seen his sister.

"Surely, Emory could not have been so foolish as to tell her she had seen me in that saloon giving money to the woman who threw the bouquet to Millbanke! If she did, it is all up with me there. Confound the women! They are always meddling some way! Hanged if I don't believe she and Emory are in love with that mill boy. That ducking in the river has turned their heads. But I must know if Emory really has told her." And he turned and retraced his steps.

Going in quest of his sister, he found her in her room.

"Emory, have you told Jessie?" he asked, as he put his head in at the door of her room.

"No," she replied.

"Are you going to tell her?"

"No. But she will hear of it through Tom Henley."

"Jack Millbanke, you mean."

"No, I mean Tom Henley."

"Does she associate with him?" he sneered.

"She likes to meet gentlemen occasionally, Berkeley, as most women do, and he seems to be one."

But he said no more. He went out again, feeling very much relieved over the fact that Jessie Mandeville had not yet been told of his villainy, but there was a tugging at his heart, a great fear that his part in that infamous proceeding would be brought home to him. That evening Tom Henley and Phil Dodd strolled into the Lawrence Hotel, and there met a crowd of baseball enthusiasts, who were discussing the contest for the Lawrence pennant.

"How is Jack?" a dozen asked Tom at once.
"Jack is all right," Tom replied, "but he isn't accepting any more bouquets."

"Will he play next Saturday?"

"Yes, if he feels as well as he does now."

Just then Henry St. Clair of the Grays came in. Everybody liked him. Henley shook hands with him, and a crowd gathered about them.

"Where's Berkeley Ward?" Tom asked St. Clair.

"Over at the club rooms, I think."

"Is he coming over here tonight?"

"I don't know. He feels very badly over Jack's accident."

"Accident!" exclaimed Tom.

"Yes. I don't believe that bouquet was drugged."

"But the doctors say it was!"

"Yes, so I heard. But doctors sometimes make mistakes. There were several varieties of flowers in that bouquet, I understand, each one with a perfume of its own. I don't believe any doctor could detect a deadly drug among so many odors."

"But we all saw Jack go down under the effects of it," said Tom.

"Yes, and we also saw both the doctors smelling the bouquet," returned St. Clair. "Why didn't they go down, too? You know, Tom, that Jack fainted in the first game we played, when he strained himself making such an effort to score the winning run. I believe he overstrained himself again on Saturday."

"I believe you," said Tom. "I don't believe you would countenance such a thing as that. But I do believe that one of the members of your team was at the bottom of it."

"Is it only suspicion, or have you good grounds for making such an assertion?"

"I think I have, and you will hear something startling before you are many hours older."

"I can't believe it possible that anyone connected with our team would do such a thing," said St. Clair, shaking his head. While they were talking over the matter Ellis of the Grays came in and looked about as if in search of someone. When he saw St. Clair he rushed up to him and said:

"I've just left Ward at the club. He says we must call that game a draw—that we can't afford to claim it under the circumstances."

"That's the best news I've heard in a year," said St. Clair, extending his hand to Tom. "I think you ought to change your opinion of Ward after this, Henley."

Tom smiled as he answered: "Berkeley is not all fool. He does that in deference to public opinion—not from a sense of justice."

"I fear you are not disposed to deal fairly with Berkeley," said St. Clair.

CHAPTER XVII.—Jack and Jessie.

The next day Berkeley Ward declared his willingness to call the last game a draw. Jack Millbanke was going home along an un frequented street, through which he went to save time, when he met his sister Dora and Jessie Mandeville strolling along, arm in arm, like two bosom friends.

"Dora, you must have brought Miss Mandeville this way, in order to let her see how ugly I look

as I come from work," said Jack, as he bowed to the two ladies.

"Indeed I did not!" exclaimed Dora, laughing.

"You don't look ugly, either," Jessie remarked.

"Oh, your kindness of heart prompts you to say that," he replied. "I am not priding myself on my good looks, though, so it doesn't matter. I am glad you like my little sister, for she thinks you are the best and sweetest girl that ever lived."

"Does she?" exclaimed Jessie, throwing her arms around Dora and kissing her.

"Yes, and I heard him say the same thing himself, the tattler!" blurted out Dora. He kisses the ring you gave him night and morning because it was once on your finger."

"I plead guilty," said Jack, the picture of confusion, "and am not ashamed of it. It is mine. It is the idol that represents a deity, and I worship it because I can't help myself. I've tried to—to—stop. The giver of it is beyond my reach—out of my sphere, and—"

"Indeed no," said Jessie, interrupting him.

"May I worship you, then?"

"Love me, and worship only God," she replied, laying her hand in his as they walked along side by side.

"Come home with us," said Jack, "and after tea I will see you home, if your carriage is not there for you."

"I came without the carriage," she replied.

"I am glad of that. I shall see you home, then."

"Yes," she assented, and they walked leisurely toward the little cottage home of the widow Millbanke. Jack ran up to his room and quickly removed the shop stains from his face and hands, changed his clothes, and hurried down to the little sitting-room. Then he caught Jessie in his arms and kissed her.

"Jessie, will you be my wife?" he asked.

"Yes, Jack," she replied.

Dora caught her and kissed her, too, in her joy. Mrs. Millbanke was in the kitchen, for Dora had told her Jessie would take tea with them. The good woman was quite excited. She did not dream that Jack and Jessie were engaged. She was worried over her inability to provide refreshments for a rich young society woman. Dora finally left the lovers alone together, and went to her mother's assistance. When she heard that Jessie had promised to marry Jack, she sank down on a chair and gazed at Dora in speechless amazement. She went to her room to change her dress, and Dora looked after the table. In due time the table was ready, and Jack led Jessie into the little dining-room.

"Mother," he said, leading Jessie up to the widow's end of the table, "Jessie has promised to be a sister to Dora, and a daughter to you. I am sure you will love her for herself as well as for my sake."

"Yes, indeed," said the happy mother, clasping Jessie to her heart. "I do love her for her kindness to you."

It was indeed a happy party in that little cottage that evening, and Jessie, if possible, was the happiest of all. It was agreed among them to keep the engagement a profound secret till such time as Jessie herself saw proper to announce it. Jack was too happy to object to anything proposed. An hour later Jack and Dora walked home with her, leaving her at the gate of her residence. On their way back they met Tom Henley and Joe Mix.

THE RIVAL NINES

"Hello!" Tom exclaimed. "I've been looking for you all the evening. Where in thunder have you been?"

"Been home up to half an hour ago, and am on my way back there now," and Jack's face betrayed the happiness he felt in his soul. "What's up?"

"Ward has agreed to call the last game a draw," Tom replied.

"Well, that's good news," Jack remarked.

Joe took charge of Dora and said:

"You two talk baseball, I'll talk to Dora," and they both went off laughing in the direction of the Millbanke cottage.

Jack and Tom went in another direction, arm in arm.

"I heard a bit of news to-night quite by accident," Tom said.

"What is it?"

"That Dan Fallon called at the Lawrence Club House a few days before the last game was played, sent up-stairs for Berkeley Ward, and the two had a long private conference."

"Have you got it straight, Tom?" Jack asked him.

"Yes, I think I have. I overheard it quite by accident, and the parties don't know I was in hearing distance of them. They didn't mention Dan's name. The truth is they don't know it. They spoke of him as the red-haired fellow."

"That is proof enough as to his identity. But where is Dan? That's the question."

"The detectives know where he is, but won't arrest him till they have something tangible against him."

"It seems to me that we have that already."

"Yes, it looks that way to me, too, but they say it is suspicious but not positive enough. I dare not tell 'em that his own sister saw him pay money to the woman, I would not do that for my right arm."

"No. She is a sweet girl. Jessie said she heard her say you were a true gentleman all the way through."

"By George! I hope she told the truth," and Tom laughed, feeling very happy over the knowledge that she had a good opinion of him.

CHAPTER XVIII.—Dora Follows Jack's Example—The Captain of the Grays Plays Another Trick.

When Jack left Tom and wended his way homeward he was surprised to find Joe and Dora at the gate talking in a very lover-like way. Joe had been paying her some attention for several months, but not in a way to cause comment.

"Hello!" Jack exclaimed, as he came up. "Making love over the gate in the starlight, eh?"

"Well, that's a good way, is it not?" Joe asked.

"Yes, I suppose so," and he reached over the gate and pulled Dora's ear playfully, saying: "So you are in it, too, are you?"

He could not see her blushes or the happy light in her eyes, or he could have read the secret of her heart. Joe had declared his love for her and she had confessed her love for him. The young lover had pledged himself to toil and save till he had bought and paid for a home, and she had promised to be his wife as soon as he could provide a

home for her. They both gave a guilty laugh, and Jack added:

"I stand as a father to her, Joe, and if you expect to win her you must play ball better than you did in the last game."

"All right, old man. If we win the next game I'll ask you for her."

"Oh, you must ask her first."

"I've done that and she says it's all right."

"The deuce!" and Jack reached over the gate, put his arm about Dora's neck and pulled her to him till their cheeks touched. "Are you in love, too, little sister?"

"Yes, Jack," she whispered.

"Well, kiss him good night and come in," and he turned and walked toward the house, leaving the young lovers to themselves for a few moments. She joined him on the little porch and went into the house with him. That night Jack had a series of dreams that alternated between baseball and love-making. In each one he was supremely happy, for he won in both fields. When he went down to breakfast the next morning, he saw that Dora had told her mother of her engagement to Joe Mix.

"Don't worry, mother," he said to her. "You shall not be left alone. I'll never leave you as long as either of us live."

"I won't mind being alone if you two are happy," she replied.

"But I could never be happy if you are left alone," said Dora.

"No, nor I," added Jack.

"Well, be sure you both be happy," said the mother.

Jack hurried away to the mill, and got there just in time. Tom Henley rushed up to him, and said:

"They've caught Dan."

"Have they?"

"Yes—at midnight. He was concealed in the house of Sallie West's mother."

"The deuce!"

"Yes. The detectives laid for him and nabbed him."

"Well, you'll have to go and tell your story in court this morning, won't you?"

"I don't know. I'll know by noon, I guess."

Just before noon an officer came to the mill and asked for Tom and Jack. He was led to the places where they were at work.

"You are to appear at the City Court at 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon in the case against West and Fallon."

That was what the officer said to each as he handed him the summons.

"I can't do it," Jack said.

"That is your lookout," said the officer, shrugging his shoulders.

"The Reds and Grays play ball at 4 o'clock," Tom explained.

"The court has nothing to do with baseball. I think you will get into trouble if you fail to appear in court."

Both Jack and Tom were puzzled to know what to do. They were never involved in a case in court in their lives before, and had not a very definite idea of what the consequences would be if they failed to attend in this case. They read on the notice:

"Herein fail not under penalty of the law," and naturally thought it something awful.

At the dinner hour Jack went to the office and submitted the matter to the junior member of the firm.

"It is very strange," he said, after reading the notice. "It is usual to call witnesses at ten in the morning. I'll go down and see about it. There is a trick of some kind in it, I guess."

When the junior partner came back to the mill in the middle of the afternoon he told Jack he could not see the judge at all, and had to go the office of the lawyer who was to defend Fallon and the woman. He found him in and, on inquiring, learned that the judge had set that hour to hear the case. He then went to his own lawyer and left the matter in his charge to either have it called in the forenoon, or else put off until Monday.

"At the best," said the mill owner, "all they can do is to postpone the case and fine you for not being present. Go ahead and play the game for all you are worth."

"All right, sir, and I'll win the game if our best licks can do it."

The next morning it was known through the mills that Jack and Tom would not go to court to appear against Fallon and the West woman. The mill hands all left work at three o'clock and hurried away to the baseball grounds, eager to see the game. The grandstand was rapidly filling up an hour before the game was to be called, and every available spot was occupied all round the field by those who could not secure seats on the grandstand. When the Reds came on the field the vast crowd of working people made the welkin ring with their cheers. The ladies on the grandstand waved handkerchiefs, fans and parasols. As for Jack he received an ovation. Berkeley had regained a good deal of favor by calling the last game off, and so he, too, received a welcome.

Just before the game was called Berkeley Ward went up to Tom Henley and said:

"The case against Fallon and the West woman has been dismissed by the court, no witnesses appearing against them. I shall now have you arrested for defamation of character."

CHAPTER XIX—The Reds Win.

Berkeley Ward's object in telling Tom Henley, the pitcher for the Reds, that the charges against Fallon and the West woman had been dismissed, was to disconcert him. He knew how Tom hoped to get him into the meshes of the law by swearing to having seen him pay money to the woman. He accomplished his object, for Tom was all broke up over it. The pitcher hastened to tell Jack about it, and the young captain was equally astonished and disgusted.

"He has beaten us, Tom," Jack said. "We made a mistake in not arresting him at once, instead of waiting."

"Yes, so we did. But that judge must have been in league with him. Why didn't he put off the case till Monday?"

"Well, I don't know. We must eat 'em today if we can."

"Yes, but I'm just broke up over the racket, and that whelp of the Grays is laughing at us in his sleeve."

"Let him laugh. I'm ahead of him, anyway."

"How?" and Tom looked at him quizzically.

"I'll tell you some other time. Just do your best today. We are two to their nothing, you know."

"Is that what you mean?" Tom asked.

"Partly. I'll tell you more later," and Jack hurried away to escape Tom's questions.

He really meant that he had won Jesse Mandeville, but did not mean to say so.

"I'm blest if I quite understand Jack," Tom muttered to himself as he gazed after him.

He sauntered over to Berkeley Ward and said to him:

"If you play the game today as well as your lawyer played that drugging case you will win."

"What do you mean?" Ward demanded blusteringly.

"I mean that your lawyer has just saved you from State Prison by a bit of sharp practice."

Ward sprang upon him like an enraged tiger. Biff! Biff! Tom gave him two blows with lightning-like rapidity on nose and eyes. It was over in thirty seconds, for both Reds and Grays sprang forward and separated them. A tremendous sensation was the result among the thousands who had come to see the game, and hundreds rushed into the field to be near the scene of the encounter.

"Clear the field!" cried the umpire and manager.

The police engaged for the occasion had a time of it in clearing the field. Up on the grandstand Emory Ward, who had seen the fight, very promptly fainted and a great deal of excitement centered about her. Somebody brought water and dashed it into her face. She gave a gasp, started as if stung, and opened her eyes.

"It is all over now, dear," said Jessie Mandeville. "They did not fight, and they are going to play now. Don't get excited."

But the play did not begin at once. Berkeley Ward's left eye was closed and his nose was out of repair. It was impossible to play, and so a substitute took his place, to the disgust, if not despair, of the Grays.

"What was it about?" Jack asked Tom, as soon as he could get at his pitcher.

"He wanted to lick me," Tom replied. "He sprang at me, and I gave him two which I had been saving up for him."

"It may count against us if we should win."

"He tried to unnerve me by his news, and I handed him the remark that it saved him from State Prison. He jumped at me and I biffed him."

"Served him right," said Jack.

"Play!" yelled the umpire.

The Grays went to the bat, and Henley at once began to puzzle them with his curves and gyrations. Only one smashed the ball and he fled out.

The Reds found St. Clair a dangerous pitcher, and not one of them got to first base. In the second inning, Jones, of the Grays, sent the ball skyward over left center, and sped away to first and second base. Phil Dodd stood to catch it on the fly, but by a strange mishap the ball grazed his hands and landed on his head with such force as to stretch him at full length on his back, and then flew off at a tangent. Jones made a dash for third, and reached the home plate, amid a roar from the vast crowd. Jack and Mix ran to Phil to pick him up. He was quite dazed for a time.

THE RIVAL NINES

"How did it happen, Phil?" Jack asked.

"Hanged if I know. I ought to have bagged it, but it got away from me."

"Can you keep up?"

"Yes?"

"Sure?"

"Yes. I'm not hurt."

"But don't you feel shaky on your pins?" Joe asked him.

"No. I'm all right. It was an accident."

"Yes, and a bad one for us," said Jack.

"Play!" sang out the umpire, and each one hurried to his post.

Miller sent the ball straight out to center field and skipped to first base. Ellis flied out and the Reds went to bat. Dodd thrashed the air and the crowd eyed him as if half suspicious of the effect of his accident. The second ball was sent, by a glancing blow, gyrating to left center, and Dodd rushed to first. Ellis tried to bag it, but it twisted out of his hands and went bounding away. Dodd skipped like an ostrich for home. The crowd rose at him and yelled like lunatics. By a desperate slide, he touched the home plate just a tenth of a second ahead of the ball.

"Judgment!" cried Jack.

"Safe!" replied the umpire.

The Grays were mad and protested.

"Play!" called the umpire.

Owens flied out and Brandt got to second base only, so the second inning found the two teams with one run each. The third and fourth added one more to each, so they stood 3 and 3. The excitement ran to fever heat among the spectators. The ninth was a hotly contested one. The Grays, made some good hits, but failed to get home. If the Reds succeeded in getting home the game would be theirs. Fred Alden was the first at the bat and got to second base on a hot grounder to left center, Joe Mix flied out and Phil Dodd took the willow. He let two balls pass him and then sent the ball far out to right field, and Fred pushed to the home-plate like a wild deer, winning by a hair's breadth.

CHAPTER XX—For the League Pennant.

The pennant had been won, and the mill men on the ground made a rush for the field. Every one of the nine was lifted upon the shoulders of stalwart men and borne around the inclosure. Jack Millbanke was the central figure of the wild tumult. Round and round the field they went with the winning team, the men singing and cheering and the band playing. Jack was brought round again in front of Jessie Mandeville, and a semblance of quiet was secured. She rose to her feet and the crowd gave her aovation. It did not disconcert her, for she had memorized her little speech thoroughly, and was now eager to give the pennant into the hands of the victor. It was a neat little speech, and when she handed the silken pennant to him she added:

"The Reds have won it fairly and honorably, and I am confident I shall have the pleasure of presenting to you the diamond badge I have promised the winner of the league pennant for Lawrence. The ladies of Lawrence send you forth as their champions on the diamond field, and for their sake I am sure you will all do your best."

She sat down and was cheered to the skies. But it was noticed that she had not uttered a word about the Grays. Every eye was now on Jack Millbanke, the mill boy captain of the Reds.

"Miss Mandeville," he said, in clear ringing tones, "this is an instance of woman's influence over man. When our team heard that you had offered a pennant for a local prize, and a diamond badge to the Lawrence team that won the league pennant, we held a meeting and resolved to win both. We cared little for either prize in itself, but we did care for the bright smiles back of each, and with us that is the greatest of all prizes."

That was a parting tribute to Jessie at which she blushed and the crowd yelled. Everybody was delighted with his speech, and hundreds ran up to shake his hand. His kind words for the Grays won him many friends, knowing as they did the trouble that had existed between the captain of that team and himself. Berkeley Ward had gone home. He did not stay to see the game. Emory went home in Jessie's carriage and did not see him until they met at the supper table.

"I heard many say you would have won had you not left the field," his father said to him. "It is unfortunate you cannot control your temper."

"It was a put-up job," Berkeley replied.

"But you attacked him!"

"Yes—to resent an insult given to bring about that result."

"Indeed! That puts it in a different light. If the rest of the team knew that they might consent to calling it a drawn game."

"They haven't any love of fair play in their make-up. Men of their stamp never have."

"It strikes me that young Millbanke displayed a very manly spirit in his speech," said the elder Ward.

"Of course. He did that for effect. He would never give up an advantage, however dishonestly gained."

"I saw you go up to Tom Henley about five minutes before the fight," said Emory, his sister, who had been listening to what was said, "and speak to him. He seemed to be very much astonished at something you said to him, and went over and talked with Jack a few minutes. What do you say to him?"

"I don't remember," Berkeley replied, a little confused.

"That's strange, for neither of you had spoken before since your quarrel. I am quite sure that the insult he gave you was the result of something you said to him. Maybe he isn't to blame after all."

"No; not if you are to be the judge," he retorted. "That dirty, ill-mannered mill crowd seem to be your special favorites."

"Do you wish me to tell you why?"

He quailed before her, and exclaimed, shaking his head:

"No, no! Let it drop! The game has ended. I am sick of it," and he arose and left the table.

Her father never knew that she had been an eye-witness of her brother paying money to the West woman within an hour after that bouquet episode the week before. The next day Jack sent a challenge to the champion team of the National Baseball League to play for the league pennant. The challenge was accepted, the games to be

played in the City of Philadelphia on the grounds of the Athletic Club.

Berkeley Ward left the city a few days later and his most intimate friends did not know where he was. But in the excitement no one noticed his absence. When the train that bore the team to Philadelphia started on its journey, several thousand people were at the Lawrence station to see them off. Jack bore a handsome bouquet given him by Jessie Mandeville and all the others had similar ones from other girls. To his surprise Tom Henley received one from Emory Ward and Joe Mix bore one given him by Dora Millbanke. On the train were scores of sporting men from other cities. Many of them crowded into the car allotted to the Reds. One, a stalwart fellow standing near Jack, suddenly caught him by the arm and hissed:

"Hand it back or I'll smash you."

Jack tried to release himself and the fellow downed him with a blow in the face. The assailant was instantly seized. He said Jack had picked his pockets of watch and money.

"Kill the liar!" cried Tom Henley, trying to get at the accuser.

He was held by those near him. The car was too crowded for a fight. Jack was lifted to his feet the maddest person ever seen.

"Make room for us!" he cried out. "Give us room and let us fight it out."

"Yes! Yes!" cried the Reds. "Give him a chance!"

"Search him first!" sung out the accuser. "If I made a mistake I'll stand up and let him smash me in the face. He picked my pockets."

Jack was searched and to his horror, the watch and pocketbook of the stranger were found in his pocket.

CHAPTER XXI—The Man Who Was Robbed.

For a brief moment or two after the articles were taken from his pocket, Jack Millbanke glared at his accuser and at those about him. Then with a face livid with rage he sung out:

"Here, Reds and friends! I have toiled for an honest living for three years in the Lawrence mills. You know pretty much what was done to ruin me and how it failed. This man has been hired to put his watch and purse into my pocket in order to ruin my character. Give me fair play and I'll make him own up to it."

"You are pickpocket—a thief," said the fellow. "I made you give up the 'swag.' The officers will do the rest at the next station."

"You'll fight him, or we'll kill you!" cried Tom Henley. "Up, Reds, and at him!"

Every member of the team went for him. It was their car and only their friends had bought seats in it. The man resisted, but was knocked down and half killed in about two minutes. Then Jack went for him. He broke his nose, bunged his eyes and pounded him till he tried to escape through the window. They seized and pulled him back.

Jack's eye was puffed out from the effect of the blow.

"A doctor can fix that up for you in Philadelphia," remarked someone in the car.

The unconscious man was taken up and carried into the baggage car. No one seemed to know

who he was. The conductor said, a half-hour later, that a man who seemed to know him was attending to him.

"Has he come to?" Jack asked him.

"Yes."

"Then I want him arrested as soon as we reach the city. I'll telegraph to chief of police about it at the next station."

But at the next station the man himself left the train, and they never saw him again. The team reached the city in the evening, and were met at the station by members of the champion team. Jack's eye was nearly closed and the other one had a sympathetic discoloration under it.

"What's the matter with your eye?" one of the champions asked him.

"Had a row on board the train and was hit," he replied.

During the night leeches were applied, and the next morning, while he was not as handsome as he was when he left Lawrence, he was able to see well out of both of them. Tom Henley was just leaving the dining-room when the clerk of the hotel asked for the "pitcher."

"I am the pitcher," Tom answered him.

"There's a man here looking for you—that young man over there," and the clerk beckoned to a young man standing near the cigar counter.

The young man came over and spoke to Tom, asking if he was the pitcher for the Reds.

"Yes," he replied.

"Come this way with me, please," and he led Tom over in a corner, where he said in a low tone of voice:

"We hear that your captain is a thief—a regular pickpocket, and that he was knocked down and half killed on the train by a man whose pockets he had picked."

Tom explained the matter to him, even going into the rivalry at Lawrence. And ended by asking him to telegraph to the mayor of Lawrence.

"That's fair enough," said the man.

He did and in a few hours received the following telegram:

"There are no more honest and worthy young men in this State than Jack Millbanke and his baseball nine."

J. T. PRATHER,
"Mayor of Lawrence."

Jack's face flushed as he read it, and looking up, he said:

"I hope that satisfies you and your friends?"

"Yes," replied the Philadelphian. "We are fully satisfied."

"Very well. I'll give \$100 to find out who is at the bottom of this thing."

The Philadelphian walked away, and Tom and Jack were left together. They talked quietly for a few minutes, during which Jack seemed like one in a dream.

"This cuts deep into my very soul," said Jack, "and I don't know what to do about it."

"Face it boldly and demand investigation," Tom advised.

"Here's dispatch for you," said the hotel clerk, handing a yellow envelope to Jack.

He tore it open and read:

"Though all the world accuse you, yet will I believe in you, trust you and love you."

"JESSIE."

THE RIVAL NINES

"Ah! that settles it!" he cried, his face beaming. "We'll win the pennant, Tom."

CHAPTER XXII.—A Score of 7 to 5.

"What is it? Who is it from?" Tom asked, very much surprised at the change which had come over Jack since he opened the dispatch.

"See here, Tom, will you keep my secret?" Jack said to him.

"Yes, of course."

"Then read for yourself," and he handed him the dispatch.

Tom read it quickly.

"Great Scott, Jack!" he exclaimed; have you won her?"

"Yes; we are engaged."

Tom whistled. He had never dreamed of such a thing. It nearly took his breath away.

"Just keep it to yourself," Jack said, taking the bit of yellow paper and carefully storing it away in his breast pocket. "It just puts new life into me. We'll win the game today, or else these Philadelphians are the best players in the world."

"They are the best in the league, you know."

"Yes, but we'll beat 'em. Heavens, Tom, I must take that pennant back to Lawrence and lay it at Jessie's feet."

"Yes, so you must."

Tom went for the other members of the team, brought them to Jack, who read the dispatch to them, save the last three words, leaving the impression on their minds that it was sent to the entire team.

"Now, boys," he said to them. "We must play ball as we never played before. We must win. Do you catch on?"

"You bet we do!" replied Fred Alden, "and we are going to win, too."

"If we don't I won't go back to Lawrence," put in Phil Dodd.

The others laughed, but all said they intended to win. They marched out to the grounds and found an immense crowd there. The mayor himself was on the grandstand.

"They are manly-looking boys," the mayor said when he saw the Reds march around the field.

The ladies all declared them the handsomest team they had ever seen.

"They are not grown yet, though," said a young miss of sixteen summers. "Why didn't they send men to play?"

"Because they know their boys could fetch back the pennant," said a Lawrence man, who was near enough to hear her.

The game was called. The Philadelphia pitcher put two of the Reds out with his curves in a very few minutes, and the third smashed the ball to right center, and was caught out, amid the sneering laughter of the Philadelphia crowd. But Tom Henley's curves were equally puzzling to the Philadelphians, and three basemen thrashed the air in quick succession till the limit was exhausted, and they had to go to the field again.

"See here," said the league captain to his team, "those boys are going to give us trouble. You want to do your best. Just keep your eyes open."

In the second inning Alden smashed the ball to

left field and got to second base. Mix flied out and Dodd sent out a hot one to right center, got to second, whilst Alden cantered home. It was neatly done and the mayor himself led the applause. The audience woke up to the fact that the boys were ahead of the champions, and that Tom Henley was a wonder as a pitcher. The third inning placed the boys two ahead, and the champions began to get rattled. In the fourth the champions made one run and the Reds one, making the score stand one to three. An hour later the game ended with the Reds scoring 7 and the champions 5, and the immense crowd cheered the young victors to the skies. Jack telegraphed to Jessie:

"We beat them 7 to 5.

"JACK."

She telegraphed back:

"We know our boys will win and are proud of them

"JESSIE."

Jack showed it to the boys and they gave her three and a tiger. The next morning the city papers gave whole columns to the game. They also published the indorsement sent by the mayor of Lawrence, and apologized to the Reds for the things said about them the day before. When the second game was called a still larger crowd was there to see it. The champions no longer had an air of superiority about them, nor did they turn up their noses at the boys from Lawrence. On the contrary, they were quite nervous, for they had not yet fathomed the mystery of Tom's curves.

In the first inning both teams made one run each. In the second the champions made two runs and the Reds one. The crowd yelled itself hoarse over the gain. In the third the Reds made two runs and the champions one—thus making the score 4 to 4. The fourth inning was an exciting one, but it ended with one run to the credit of each team. The fifth was a fruitless one, and they entered upon the sixth with an even score of five each. Jack took the bat and sent the sphere bounding out to left field and got to second ere he was checked. Alden sent it in the same direction and got to second, sending Jack home ahead of him. Mix sent out a hot grounder which the right center let get away from him. Ere it was recovered Alden got home and Mix slid in on his stomach about two seconds ahead of the ball. The vast audience rose en masse and cheered, and the mayor declared it the finest inning he ever seen. The score stood 8 to 5, and the champions were almost paralyzed. The Reds raised Joe Mix on their shoulders and were going to march round the field with him when the umpire called:

"Play!"

The champions went to the bat, but they seemed dazed. They thrashed the air with the willow without making a run. The last inning was an exciting one in which the two teams made one run each, and the Reds won by two runs. Jack hastened to telegraph Jessie. He wired:

"The pennant is ours, and we are yours.

"JACK."

THE RIVAL NINES

The champions surrendered the pennant gracefully, and refused to play the third game, saying it could not change the result, and the Reds took their leave of the field of their triumph and returned home to Lawrence.

CHAPTER XXIII.—Tom's Discovery.

Just as the boys were about to leave Philadelphia to return to Lawrence, Tom Henley and Joe Mix ran up against the man whom Jack had knocked out on the train the third day before. He was accompanied by a man with a full black beard.

"Ah! You are here, are you?" Tom exclaimed, looking around for an officer.

"Yes, I am here," was the reply. "What are you going to do about it?"

"I'll have you arrested if I can find an officer."

"Why not arrest me yourself?"

"I am not an officer."

"You are glad of it, ain't you?" the man with the black beard said.

At the sound of his voice Tom wheeled, looked him full in the face, and then snatched at his beard. It was done quick as a flash. The beard came off, and Berkeley Ward stood facing him. With an exclamation of wrath Ward aimed a blow at his face. Tom parried it, and then the other struck at him.

Almost instantly two officers appeared, and both were caught.

"I'll go with you and make charges against them, officers," said Tom.

"So will I," said Joe. "I know one of them."

"What do you arrest me for?" Ward demanded.

"As a suspicious character," was the reply.

"But I am a well known citizen of Lawrence."

"You have been for three days in the company of a well-known crook, and in disguise at that. We have been watching you."

"Great Scott!" gasped Tom, looking at Ward. "You put up that job on Jack!"

Ward was white as a sheet.

"Joe," said Tom, turning to Mix. "Run back to the hotel and tell Jack we have caught his man and Berkeley Ward together, and that he must remain over and see what will be done with them. Tell him to telegraph to Lawrence postponing our return home."

Joe hurried away and Tom went on to the station with the prisoners. The officer had hold of Ward's left arm as they walked along the street. Suddenly Ward drew a revolver from a pocket and fired at Tom's head some five or six feet away. Tom's hat fell to the ground and he reeled and fell against the other officer. Crack! A second shot followed, and Berkeley Ward sank down to the pavement, blood streaming from a ghastly wound on his head. The two officers were utterly dumbfounded—the whole thing was done so quickly and unexpectedly. They stood over the two fallen ones as if uncertain what to do, and a crowd quickly gathered. The officer who held the other prisoner made sure of keeping him by handcuffing his right wrist to his left. Then he drew his club, and assisted the other in keeping back the crowd. Other policemen came, and then an ambulance followed.

"Both stunned—only flesh wounds," said the

ambulance surgeon. "Take them to the hospital."

The two were sent to the hospital and the other prisoner was taken to the police station and locked up. Joe Mix was under the impression that Tom would soon follow him to the hotel where the rest of the team waited for him. Nearly an hour passed and then news came to the hotel that the pitcher for the victorious Reds had been shot on the street. Joe led the way to the spot where he had left Tom, followed by the others. They soon saw plenty of people who were ready to tell all about the murder and suicide, and how an ambulance came and took the two bodies away.

"We'll go to the hospital," said Jack; and in a very few minutes the team were at the door of the hospital inquiring for Tom.

"The wound is not dangerous," the head surgeon told them. "The bullet grazed his head, making a painful wound. The other is worse hurt, but the bullet glanced from his head, too."

"When can Henley leave the hospital?" Jack asked the surgeon.

"Perhaps in a day or two if no fever sets in," was the reply.

Jack then went to the telegraph office and sent a dispatch to his employer, telling him what had occurred, stating that the team would remain in Philadelphia a day or two longer. Two hours later he received a reply from his employer saying that if the team needed any money he could draw on him for it. They did not need any money, but the dispatch gave the boys a comfortable feeling over their loss of time at the mill. In the evening Jack went to the hospital again, hoping to get a chance to speak to Tom. But he was not permitted to see him, yet he saw Berkeley Ward's father go into the room where Tom was.

"Ah, he is trying to get Tom to agree not to prosecute Berkeley," Jack muttered.

"Can I send a note to him?" he asked of the surgeon.

"Yes."

Jack wrote:

"Make no agreement about anything until you see me.—'JACK.'

The elder Ward and a lawyer were with Tom when the note was handed in. He read the note and said:

"I will not agree to anything for the present."

"Why not?" Mr. Ward asked.

"I have been asked by Jack Millbanke not to do so," and he showed him the note.

They both left the room and went downstairs in quest of Jack. He was in the reception room. Mr. Ward went up to him and extended his hand toward him, Jack shook it in a half reluctant way and the other asked:

"You're not going to advise Tom to push the law on Berkeley, are you, Millbanke?"

"Yes, sir, and to push it very hard, too."

"I am sorry to find you so vindictive."

"No doubt of it. But Berkeley ought to be behind prison bars."

"Indeed, no! He ought to be in an asylum, for he is as crazy as a loon."

"Well, if the doctors say he is, he will be sent to one, but until they do say so, I shall push the law on him to the last notch," and then he told him all about those drugged flowers, and the repeated efforts Berkeley had made to ruin him.

THE RIVAL NINES

Mr. Ward was astonished. He had not dreamed of Berkeley being guilty of any actual wrong doing.

"It is still more proof that he is crazy," he remarked to Jack.

"I am not inclined to think that way," said Jack, shaking his head. "He should wear prison stripes," and with that he arose and left the rich man and his lawyer to think over what he had

CHAPTER XXIV.—Conclusion.

As soon as Jack left them the two men returned to Tom Henley and renewed their pleading. But Tom was firm. He could not be moved. He finally had to call on the doctor for protection, and then they left him. On the second day he was permitted to leave the hospital and return to Lawrence. The Reds boarded the train and took the league pennant with them—the prize for which they had struggled so hard. He was led to the Mandeville carriage, where Jessie, the fair patron of the game, was waiting to pin the promised diamond studded badge on his breast.

"The Reds are proud to lay this trophy at your feet, Miss Mandeville," he said, laying the league pennant at her feet in the carriage. "We fought hard for it solely to show you how much we appreciate the encouragement you gave us."

"Wear this as a pledge of my personal friendship for every member of your club," she replied, leaning forward and pinning it to the bosom of his red uniform. Then she stood up in the carriage and waved her welcome to the others who could not reach her.

"Jack, get in here and let me take you to your mother. You don't know how proud she is of your victory," and as she spoke she made room for him at her side.

"Oh, Jack!" she said in low tones, lest the driver should hear her. "You don't know how proud I am of you. Winning the pennant in a ball game is nothing in itself; but your conduct has won the highest praises everywhere. I love you for your manliness, and one year from the day you saved my life my hand shall be yours if you choose to claim it."

"I shall claim it," he replied, pressing her hand in his.

When they reached the little cottage home his mother and sister ran out to welcome him. Jessie entered the cottage with them, and there, out of sight of others, he pressed her to his heart and whispered words in her ear that filled her heart with joy and made her eyes sparkle. Joe Mix called early in the evening and Dora gave him a reception that made his heart feel light and happy. As for Tom Henley, the pitcher, to whose curves and twists the victory was largely due, he was taken to his home in a carriage. A great crowd of the mill people followed him, to show how much they felt for him. A day or two later Jack and Dora and Jessie went to see Tom. Jessie begged him to promise not to push the law on Berkeley for his attempt to kill him. He was obstinate, saying he could not make such a promise.

"Is it possible a member of my nine would refuse me anything?" she asked.

Tom glanced quickly at her and said:

"No member should refuse you anything—even his life. I resign right here and now."

"Your resignation cannot be accepted," she re-

plied. "Tom, you hold the life of Emory Ward in your hands. If he is made a convict it would kill her—one of the sweetest girls that ever lived. It is for her sake that I beg—not his. He is undeserving. But she is a true woman, and the sweetest friend I have on earth. Can you refuse now?"

"No. Tell her that for her sake I forgive Berkeley all he has ever done to me."

Jessie threw her arms about his neck and kissed him.

"Hello! Jack! did you see that?" Tom exclaimed.

"Yes, old man. That's all right. She is going to boss the crowd of us."

Tom's face turned white and then red. His eyes met hers and she said:

"Faint hearts never win."

She and Dora then left the room. A carriage drove up to the door of the little cottage and Mrs. Ward and Emory alighted from it. Jack met them at the door and the mother's heart failed her, for she had heard how Jack had told Tom not to promise anything.

"Mr. Millbanke," she said, "I have come to see Tom and I beg you not to harden his heart against me."

"Mrs. Ward, I came here with my sister and Miss Jessie. Tom has just promised them that for Miss Emory's sake he will forgive everything."

Emory's face grew scarlet and then pale. She dropped into a seat and seemed almost overcome. Jessie ran to her and caught her in her arms, saying:

"Come and thank the dear boy yourself," and she hurried her into the room where Tom sat in a rocker.

Emory went up to him and extended her hand—her face covered with blushes, but a happy light in her eyes. Jessie turned quickly away and left them alone. In five minutes they knew each other's hearts, and had vowed to love each other as long as life should last. A little later Mrs. Ward went in and thanked him. She finally went home alone, leaving Emory with Jessie. Jessie left her with Tom, and so they were happy. In another year the city of Lawrence was treated to another sensation, that set the best society crazy. Jessie and Jack, Emory and Tom, and Dora and Joe Mix, all called on a minister and were quietly married. Jack and Tom are now prosperous business men and very happy with their families.

Next week's issue will contain "ON THE PLAINS WITH BUFFALO BILL; OR, TWO YEARS IN THE WILD WEST."

Be A Detective

Make Secret Investigations

Earn Big Money. Work home or travel. Fascinating work. Excellent opportunity. Experience unnecessary. Participants free. Write:

GEORGE R. WAGNER

Detective Training Department
2190 Broadway, New York

AL, THE ATHLETE, OR, THE CHAMPION OF THE CLUB

By R. T. BENNETT

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER V.—(Continued)

"And, Al Adams, we owe all our happiness to you!"

"Not at all!" remonstrated the young athlete. "I don't see how."

"Had you not so gallantly saved our boy from those tramps this disclosure might never have taken place as it has done."

"Purely an accident, sir."

"A lucky one, backed up by manly pluck."

"Well," laughed the boy, "I am more than pleased that I have been the accidental means of bringing your son back to you."

"My dear fellow, it has made me your lifelong friend."

"I could not ask for a greater honor, sir," was our hero's polite reply. "And now, Mr. Harlow, I would like to know how Bud came to be in the possession of William Drew's wife for the past ten years?"

The happy smile on the old gentleman's face was instantly replaced by a dark expression of intense anger, and he replied, sternly:

"I shall compel that man to explain it, never fear."

"Do you think he or his wife abducted Bud?"

"I have good reason to think that it was done at the instigation of Drew. He and I have been bitter enemies for many years."

"Then he had a motive?"

"Yes; a strong one, too! I don't mind telling you about it. All I ask is that you will keep the matter a secret from the general public."

"You can rely on my discretion, sir."

"Well, it was about ten years ago that Drew and I had a quarrel over a business matter, and I am sorry to say that we came to blows. I gave him a terrible thrashing, and he swore to avenge himself in the most terrible manner. It was shortly after this that my little two-year-old son was stolen from his carriage while the nurse had him out for a ride. I suspected that Drew was responsible for it, but never could prove it. Every effort we made to recover the child proved to be useless."

"But how do you suppose Drew's wife came to have the boy?"

"I have no idea, but I intend to find out all about it."

As Al thought his presence in the house was now an intrusion, he soon afterward took leave of Mr. and Mrs. Harlow, shook hands with Bud, and was accompanied to the gate by Jennie.

"Well," he laughed, as they paused under the trees, "my call here was quite an eventful one, and ended far differently than your father imagined it would when he first invited me to see him."

"Al," she replied, earnestly, "you cannot think

how mortified I was when I learned how unjustly my father had condemned you, and I hope—"

"There! There! No apologies!" he interrupted with a laugh. "I don't blame him, so let that end it."

"And you will not leave off calling here?" she asked, anxiously.

"As if I could, you little goose!" he laughed, as he took her white little hand in his own and put his arm on her shoulder.

She looked up into his eyes, and a hot flush suddenly swept over her face as he bent closer to her and whispered:

"May I?"

Her head sunk over on his breast for an instant, and he imprinted a kiss on her lips.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, breaking from his arms in pretended anger.

"Good-night!" he laughed, and away he went for his home, and she watched his manly figure until it vanished around a bend in the road.

On the following morning Al was up bright and early, and after a morning run he had his breakfast.

He gave his mother a brief outline of what had happened at the banker's house the previous night, greatly relieving her mind, as she had been rather nervous about the purport of the letter Al received.

At ten o'clock he was down to the club-house grounds, drilling his nine for the baseball game which was to be played on the following day.

There was a marked improvement in all the boys and in the afternoon he felt as if he had whipped them into nearly as good trim as it was possible to put them.

"Remember, fellows," said he, just before he dismissed them for the day, "this is the last practice game you are going to get, and it will be up to you to-morrow to play even better than you have ever been doing to-day, or we will lose the pennant."

"We'll do our best!" said Nick.

Then they scattered.

On the following afternoon all the boys were clad in their natty white uniforms, and with bats, balls, masks and gloves they climbed into the waiting stages, watched by a big crowd.

Al carefully scanned every one, and seeing that all were ready, he climbed up beside the driver and exclaimed:

"Go ahead!"

A tremendous cheer arose from the crowd as they started off; tin horns were tooted, hats and handkerchiefs were waved, and flags were fluttered, the boys responding with a wild yell.

There were bells on the horses, and as they went down the country road kicking up a cloud of dust they came up with numerous other vehicles, all heading for the South Common baseball grounds, where the match was to be played.

"Midwood rooters are turning out in force," said Al to Nick as they sped along. "They are bound to give us a good send-off, anyway."

"It's pride in the home team, of course."

"Look at that big tally-ho ahead!"

"Great Scott! It's filled with girls, is it not?"

"Yes, and there is Jennie Harlow with a bevy of her friends and Bud."

When the boys were passing Jennie sung out:

PLUCK AND LUCK

"Don't do a thing to the Mercurys, boys!"
 "You bet we won't!" shouted Al, smilingly.
 "And we are going to have you for our mascot—do you mind?"

"You'll win if it's up to me to decide the game!" laughed Jennie.

And soon afterwards they reached the grounds.

CHAPTER VI.—The Ball Game.

There were fully a thousand people in the grounds a quarter of an hour before the game was called, the grandstand teeming with the wealth and fashion of all the surrounding country.

Jennie and her friends occupied one of the boxes.

The bleachers were black with men and boys, and flags and bunting waved in the breeze.

Venders of fruits, peanuts and lemonade did a thriving business, and nearly every one held a score-card and pencil.

A young man named Barry was chosen as umpire.

Drew and his men wore brown costumes. They lost the toss and took to the garden to get a line on the batting ability of the Juniors.

The two nines lined up as follows:

Midwood—Adams, p; Marsh, c; Abby, 1b; Turner, 2b; Winters, 3b; Nelson, rf; Chase, lf; Rich, ss; Burt, cf.

Mercury—Hoppe, 3b; Clark, cf; Bowers, rf; Howard, 1b; Martin lf; Connor, ss; Kelly, 2b; Camps, c; Drew, p.

In the first inning Al led off with a good single to left, and was advanced to second on Nick's fly to Howard.

Abby bunted and Turner walked, filling the bags.

Then the first howl went up from the fans.

"Winters at the bat!"

Joe was a favorite and a good hand at the wagon tongue, for he made a drive for two bags that set the grass afire, and sent in Adams, Abby and Turner in one, two three order.

Everybody stood up and let out a roar, tin-horns split the air, and a cowbell began to work like a trip hammer.

When Nelson drove out a red-hot single to left Winters scored.

"Four runs and only one man out!" came a gleeful voice from one of the boxes, and Al saw Jennie clapping her little hands to him.

But the next moment Chase popped a neat little fly to Drew, and the rascally young pitcher sent the sphere to Howard, and two very sad-looking boys went out in the field with the bunch from Midwood.

With Hope facing the box Al began to put in some of his prettiest inshoots, for he knew that the Mercury third-baseman hated them.

It was useless, however, for he suddenly led off with a two-baser to center which was muffed by Burt, and when Clark cracked out a long fly it sent Hope to the plate with a mark to the good.

Bowers singled over second, putting Clark on third, and Howard sacrificed to Abby, failing to score Clark, but putting Bowers on second.

Martin hit to Rich, and Connor was thrown out by Al, as Abby covered the bag just one second before he got there.

While the usual uproar was going on in the

bleachers the Midwoods came trooping in with a bland and happy smile.

"Rich up!" announced Al; then he walked over to Nick and arranged a few signals they had agreed upon for the next inning.

Drew looked as ugly as sin as he faced the little short-stop, wet his fingers, and made a sly motion to Camps, who crouched down.

Whiz! came the leather like a gunshot.

Crack! and away darted Ben, sprinting like a racehorse.

He had to slide, for Clark had got the ball on a bounce and put it over to Howard so fast that the runner and the sphere seemed to arrive at the bag at the same instant.

"Out!" yelled a lanky Mercury rooter in the stand.

"Wake up!" roared a Midwood fan. "You're daffy!"

Barry, the umpire, held up his hand.

"Runner safe!" he announced, cold bloodedly.

A howl of protest arose from the Mercury people.

"He's a bum umpire! Chase him!"

Barry was a nervy fellow, however, and he asserted again, firmly:

"Runner safe at first! Play ball!"

That settled it. There was no use kicking; his word was law.

Burt picked up a bat, Drew let drive, and Burt sung out:

"One strike!"

Ziz! hummed the leather again.

"Ball one!"

Another hot-liner came along.

Whack! and off scuttled Sam for first, while Rich made a beeline for second just as Bowers in.

The boys hugged the bags, for Al had come up to the plate and made a gesture to them, which they all understood.

"Adams!" roared the crowd.

The champion of the club smiled and faced his enemy.

"I'll strike you out if I can!" Drew exclaimed in ugly tones.

"Play ball, you lobster!" calmly answered Adams. "I don't want to speak to you any more than I've got to!"

Drew treated him to a malignant scowl and let the ball drive with a vicious twist and all the strength he had.

Keen of sight, the young athlete coolly watched the ball coming, but did not move a fraction of an inch.

And, as he calculated, the sphere missed his body and being out of Camp's reach, the catcher missed it, and Rich and Burt advanced a base apiece.

The Midwood fans howled with joy, but the Mercury rooters groaned and began to abuse Drew for his (as they imagined) bad pitching.

"Missed me!" jeered Al.

"I'll knock your block off next time!" hissed Drew, vindictively.

Then he sent in a teasing outcurve, and Al let drive.

Bang! and the ball sailed high in the air and Clark made a rush to get under, while Al sprinted for first, Rich started for the plate, and Burt legged it for third.

(To be continued.)

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, MAY 4, 1927

TERMS TO SUBSCRIBERS

Single Copies.....	Postage Free	8 cents
One Copy Three Months.....	" "	\$1.00
One Copy Six Months.....	" "	2.00
One Copy One Year.....	" "	4.00

Canada, \$4.50; Foreign, \$5.00

HOW TO SEND MONEY—At our risk send P. O. Money Order, Check or Registered Letter; remittances in any other way are at your risk. We accept Postage Stamps the same as cash. When sending silver wrap the Coin in a separate piece of paper to avoid cutting the envelope. Write your name and address plainly. Address letters to

WESTBURY PUBLISHING CO., Inc.
140 Cedar Street, New York City.

FRED KNIGHT, Pres. and Treas.
R. W. MARR, Vice-Pres. and Sec.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

EASY FOR OWNER

New Hudson-Essex cars have a convenience owners will appreciate. On the motor is attached a plate which gives instructions on how to adjust the carburetor mixture for best results. Timing instructions are similarly given.

CAPTURED GUNS

There are a large number of captured guns at Annapolis, but very little is known about some of them. Several date back to the Revolutionary War; others believed to have been brought over by Lafayette from France; some were captured from Mexico and sent home by General Scott; several were taken from the Mexicans in California, and the latter are extremely interesting, as most of them bear inscriptions. Several were taken from the ships of Admiral Cervera's fleet and others from the Spanish fleet in Manila. There are Chinese and Corean guns and four small makeshift cannon captured from the Filipino insurgents. One of them is of wood, covered by a caribou hide, and others are of iron covered with wood. They were presented to Admiral Dewey by the Archbishop of Manila. Among the Mexican guns in a bronze cannon, cast in Spain in 1474, carried across the Atlantic by Cortez and used by him in the conquest of Mexico.

NEW PARIS STYLES

Trousers constitute the latest problem confronting the well-dressed woman of Paris.

Shall they adopt trousers? Or shall they scorn the new Culotte-skirt offered by the Paris dress makers for Spring wear?

Such dressmaking houses as Lanvin, Patou and Poiret say women may wear trousers and be right up in the front row of fashion. They offer in many versions a new trouser-skirt which has characteristics of both of the garments for which it is named.

Some are wide and some are narrow, but all are really trousers of skirt length with the division so cleverly concealed by pleats fore and aft that when the wearer is motionless there is nothing to indicate that they are trousers.

Even the staid old house of Worth, dean of Paris dressmaking establishments, is showing trouser-skirts this Spring. Society—ready to try anything once—has already said "Yes" and placed its orders.

On the boulevards young women may be seen wearing trouser-skirts on fine days. But women generally appear to be waiting for fate to decide whether they are to wear trousers or skirts.

Only manufacturers appear to be taking the new style seriously. They have started making underwear to go with trouser-skirts. This new piece is called a culotte combination and is just one jump more modern than the Charleston step-in which now is being sold here.

LAUGHS

AN APARTMENT ON THE FIRST FLOOR

"Better close the shutters, Mary."

"Why?"

"Two below outside."—Penn. State Froth

DON'T CALL ME FAN

"Are you a movie fan?"

"Do you mean to insinuate that I look like an electrical contrivance?"—Wisconsin Octopus

SCALPER'S PRICES

"I hear a seat on the Stock Exchange costs \$87,000."

"Um. Just fancy a box party there."—Williams Purple Cow.

A CATSY EPIGRAM

The cat in love catches no mice.—Kansas Sour Owl.

LEARNING THE BUSINESS

"Do you think you could learn to care for me?"

"Oh, yes. I'm studying to be a trained nurse."—Oklahoma Whirlwind

RETRENCHED TOO SOON

Clara—"Why did you break your engagement with George? He used to bring you such delicious candy."

Dora—"Yes, used to; but since I accepted him, he's been bringing me the twenty-five cent kind."

HAD TWINS BEFORE

Friend—"Considering that this is your third baby, I don't see why you should be so exuberantly happy over it."

Young Father—"Y-e-s, but it's only one this time."

THE RIVAL BELLES

Mr. Richfellow—"I am told that Miss Finesean took all the prizes at Vassar College. What a wonderful memory she must have."

Miss Twoseason—"Indeed she has. And it goes so far back."

A BUSINESS HEAD

Lady—"I wish to get a birthday present for my husband."

Clerk—"How long married?"

Lady—"Ten years."

Clerk—"Bargain counter to the right."

A Very Clever Capture

One dark night in November, Police Constable Weale was on duty in Metropolitan Street, Southwick, England. It was the principal thoroughfare, and flanked with the best shops, but, as is often the case, the arteries to this heart of wealth and affluence shook hands, in a manner of speaking, with poverty. Weale was as stolid a man as ever took pride in his blue cloth and buttons. He was a steady-going, sober, phlegmatic, and strong as an ox. He had never been known to lose his head, even under the most adverse circumstances, and the traps which had been laid for him had never been sprung.

This astute constable paced the street until he came to a jeweler's shop owned by Messrs. Sheen & Shimmer. There were several holes in the shutters, and the gas was always alight between sunset and sunrise, so that the constable on night duty had no difficulty in casting his eyes around the place.

At half-past one, Constable Weale took three separate glances in at the shop, tested the fastenings of the revolving iron shutters, tried the side door around the corner, and went his way.

Now, constables have a large experience in cats, and meet all sorts and sizes on their beats, and it is not to be wondered at that they pay but little attention to any promiscuous operatic music that may be borne to their ears. Metropolitan Street had its share of feline Romeos and Juliets, and Constable Weale was generally dead to their voices; but on this particular early morning a catcall of an unusual nature attracted his attention. It was like the cry of a cat with a violent cold in the head. Constable Weale whipped back the slide of his lantern, but saw nothing, and plodded on to the end of his beat, where he found Sergeant Jandrews converting a lamp-post into a writing-desk, and scribbling away in his note-book.

"All well?" queried the sergeant.

"Yes, sir," replied Constable Weale. "Not a creature about, save a beastly cat, with something the matter with its throat."

"Ah!" responded Sergeant Jandrews. "Let me think. You are relieved, by special permission, at two o'clock?"

"Yes, sir, I've got a wedding party on at my house tomorrow, and—"

"All right. By the time you have done another turn you will find me and the relief here."

The sergeant's stalwart form melted away into the darkness, and Weale retraced his footsteps. All was well until he came to Messrs. Sheen & Shimmer's, and then, if ever a man's hair rose to the crown of his hat, cap, helmet, or any kind of headgear, it was Constable Weale's. The cases on the counter had been forced, the windows stripped of chains, bracelets, gold watches and valuable trinkets, only a few silver watches having been left by the burglars, and the side door around the corner was wide open and swinging in the wind. Weale blew his whistle as soon as he could find sufficient breath, and in less than five minutes Sergeant Jandrews and two other constables came running up.

The burglary had been committed by experi-

enced hands, and about ten thousand pounds' worth of valuables had been taken.

The door had been forced in three separate places, there being three distinct locks, constructed on the most approved plan, and the detectives came to the conclusion that they must have been forced between the constable's beats. Weale, remembering the peculiar cry he had heard, made certain that he had been watched, but he had examined every doorway and place where a man might hide, and was ready to swear that he had not seen a single individual, or heard footsteps, save his own, for more than an hour previous to the moment of the discovery of the burglary.

Next to the door so cleverly entered was a small house and shop, occupied by a Mr. Lessmore, cheesemonger and butter man. He was a man of small stature, and meek and mild of disposition. When he heard of the burglary his light blue eyes grew round with terror, and his scant stock of hair bristled as if disturbed by a sudden current of air.

"Bless my heart!" he cried. "What a mercy the rascals did not pay me a visit! I have never banked my small savings, but this will be a lesson to me."

"Did you hear no sounds during the night?" asked a detective, named Tooney, who called on him.

"Not a whisper," Lessmore replied. "I woke up once during the night, and wished those cats were at the bottom of the Red Sea."

"There must have been a very clever cat with two legs among them. Let me see, Mr. Lessmore, you have not been long at Southwick?"

"Only six months. I came from Bertsea, and did well until a large firm started on the universal supply principle, and fairly settled my hash. If I had stayed in the place I should have found myself in the Bankruptcy Court."

Tooney then left, and walked straight back to the police station.

"Ask Bertsea station," he said to the man in charge of the telegraph, "what they know of Andrew Lessmore."

The answer came back quickly. "Lived here twelve months. Quiet and respectable. Member of several societies. Attended church regularly, and received a gift from the rector when he left."

"That is not enough," said Tooney. "I want to know if anything particular happened during Lessmore's residence at Bertsea."

In a few moments came the reply: "Burglary at Lady Jocelyn's. Two men arrested, tried and convicted. Shall we send particulars?"

"No use," said Tooney. "Lessmore is what he seems, and I am on the wrong scent."

At that moment there passed into the office a dapper little man, who, the moment his name was mentioned, was received with profound respect. He was no other than Superintendent Hunter, from Scotland Yard, and had run down to Southwick to see how inquiries were proceeding.

Every note made in connection with the case was placed before him, and every scrap of intelligence was given him.

"What was your reason for calling on the butter man, Tooney?" he asked.

"Well, I thought he might have heard people

about. The jimmy was used on three separate occasions, and some noise must have been made when the locks gave way."

"Good! Was that your only reason?"

"I thought I'd look him up, as he is a comparative stranger in the place."

"Good again! What sort of a trade does he do?"

"A moderate one, I should say. He keeps only one assistant, and seems to be struggling to get a living."

Superintendent Hunter smiled grimly.

"Some people struggle for their living in peculiar ways," he said. "Well, we will dismiss Mr. Lessmore. What about his assistant?"

"I know absolutely nothing about him, beyond that he seems to very attentive to his work. I don't think that I ever saw him abroad, save on Sunday."

"A very excellent character," remarked the superintendent. "I begin to take quite an interest in this good young man, and his no less praiseworthy master. A parcel is coming on for me. See that it is placed in the inspector's house, where I intended to sleep tonight."

About seven o'clock on the following morning Mr. Lessmore's assistant swept out the shop, burnished up the scales, washed and polished the marble counter, and then retired into the back room, which was used as a kind of warehouse. Selecting a tub of butter, he became very busy with a pair of wooden pats, making up butter into pound and half-pound rolles. So busily was he engaged, indeed, that he started violently when he felt himself touched on the elbow. Looking around, he saw a little man at his side. He wore a coat of antique cut, a soft felt hat, and blue spectacles set firmly upon his wrinkled nose.

"What made you come through the shop?" demanded the assistant. "You must have lifted up the counter-flap."

"I did; but I knocked three times without making you hear."

"Well, sir, what can I serve you with?"

"A pound of butter, Ah!" he said, "I see you have some remarkably fine Dutch cheeses up there. Would you mind letting me taste one or two?"

"I cannot recommend them, sir," replied the assistant. "They are of inferior quality, and Mr. Lessmore intends to send them back to the manufacturer."

While the butter was being weighed, and made into a neat parcel, the old gentleman sat on a stool and hummed to himself.

He paid with half a sovereign, counted his change carefully, and bade the assistant a civil good-morning, just as two constables in uniform strolled up.

"A queer customer that," said Mr. Lessmore's assistant, walking to the door. "I have never noticed him before, and ever since that affair next to us I have been suspicious of all strangers."

"The old gentleman does not look as if he was up to cracking a crib," said one of the officers, laughing.

"You never can tell," rejoined the assistant, fingering his apron-strings nervously. "That monster in human form, Charles Peace, acted

many an artful part. I have heard that he played sacred music on the violin, and was well-known for his love of dumb animals."

At that moment Andrew Lessmore entered the shop.

"Come, Chiston," said he, "bustle about! It is market day, you know, and we must make hay while the sun shines. Good-morning, constables. No news, I suppose?" jerking his thumb in the direction of the jeweler's shop.

"Not that I've heard."

"More's the pity," sighed Mr. Lessmore. "My wife has been so upset that I must try and find a little money to send her into the country for a change. Dear! dear! It is perfectly horrible to think that there are such villains roaming about the country! A big, burly fellow came and stared into my shop last night, and I declare he made me feel quite nervous."

The constables passed on, and Lessmore and his assistant retired into the back room.

"Get out the case," said the proprietor, "pack it up, and give notice to the railway people to call on the midday round—the sooner the better."

By eleven o'clock the business of Southwick was in full swing. People came to sell and buy, to barter, haggle and squabble, as people at at a country market will do, and so the day wore on until darkness began to set in, and the streets became quiet and deserted. As the church clock was striking eight, a railway wagon pulled up at the door of Lessmore's shop. The cases of cheeses were in the shop, and Lessmore and Chiston stood ready to help the carman.

Their hands were on the bulky package, when the early morning customer stumbled into the shop and coolly sat down upon it.

"Excuse me," he said. "A runaway horse in High Street had given me such a dreadful fright. Please let me remain here."

"As long as you like; but would you mind sitting in some other part of the shop?" Lessmore replied meekly. "Chiston, bring a chair."

"Thank you, I am very comfortable here," said the stranger.

The case was carried out into the street, but no sooner had it been placed on the pavement when a whistle sounded, and in a moment a dozen constables appeared suddenly as if they had risen from the earth.

Lessmore and Chiston were seized, and almost before they could comprehend what had happened they were handcuffed and pushed back into the shop.

"Bring that case, quick! I expect to find some rich cheese in it."

As the quaint little man spoke he whipped off his blue spectacles, pitched a hat and wig on the counter, and the features of Superintendent Hunter were revealed. He secured a crowbar and lifted the lid off the case. Pulling the topmost cheese from it he part it in two and to the surprise of his aids picked up some of the stolen jewelry. Lessmore and his aid were sent to prison for seven years. Superintendent Hunt received from Messers. Sheen and Shimmer, a fine gold watch and chain and a diamond ring as a reward.

CURRENT NEWS

JAPAN PAYS HIGHEST AUTO TAX

Automobiles in use in Tokio, Japan, must pay both municipal and perfectual taxes, which combine to make what is one of the highest annual tax rates on motor cars in the world. The yearly tax on cars over twenty horsepower is \$312.43.

FIRST BOB OF WOMAN OF 93

On her way to her ninety-third birthday, Mrs. Martha E. Gaughan, of Oroville, California, paused long enough to say a word for modern youth—and bobbed hair.

"If there is anything wrong with the young generation," she said, "blame it on their gadding parents. Bobbed hair is fine. I cut my own two months ago. I should have done it long ago."

ADVICE IS LEAN BABIES

"Fat babies, like fat turkeys, have little resistance and less good health," asserts Dr. J. L. Bloomenthal, Director of the Bureau of Child Hygiene. "Keep them normal and stay safe."

According to the bureau, 1927 models in babies should be lean. Dr. Bloomenthal, in his report, said that while New York has the second lowest mortality rate among babies much is yet to be accomplished.

"One superstition under which average mothers labor is that a fat baby is a healthy baby," he said. Another is that contagious diseases, because they are ordinary, are therefore harmless. A third is that mortality rates among children that are born puny, or don't respond to usual nourishment, is unavoidable."

NEWEST IN STYLE

Tomato-red suits will be worn by brunette men on Picadilly this Spring if the recommendations of the National Federation of Merchant Tailors are accepted by the public.

There also will be sunshine yellow for men with whose coloring it harmonizes. This is the newest shade which James Weddel, the president of the federation, has espoused.

Raisin purple also is very generally offered by fashionable tailors, who are giving more attention than ever before to giving men suitings which do not clash with their complexions. Browns are shown in a great profusion of shades, many of them very bright. In fact, suitings are much brighter than they were for Winter, and London tailors are trying to convert their customers away from the traditional dark grays, blues and browns which make London streets so drab.

ELECTRIC MODELS IN PARIS

American visitors to Paris recently, passing the display windows of a well-known dressmaker, were surprised to see real people in the window, displaying the creations of the shop.

A beautiful young woman stood in the center of the window. She smiled, raised an arm, lowered it, raised another, walked forward a step or two, walked backward, and went through various other

manoeuvres. She seemed completely unconcerned and paid no attention to the stares of the curious who crowded about the window.

But it was noticed that her smile was fixed, and that when a fly lit on her beautiful classic nose she made no effort to brush it off. Then it was revealed that the young woman was a machine. It is the newest thing in modern window display—an ordinary wax model equipped with an electric motor which operates the arms, head and legs of the effigy in a most realistic manner.

The experiment in the dressmaker's shop—this was the first time the electric model was used—was such a success that within a few weeks most of the smarter shops in Paris had installed the animated puppets. One enterprising shop fixed up its window a scenic background representing a boulevard, and several of the automatons, made up to represent men, women and children, walked back and forth in a procession of the latest styles. To add to the effect, a real taxicab was parked by the curb in the window display, with a smiling driver who occasionally lifted his hand in a gesture soliciting business.

CAUSES OF FEAR

History is filled with glowing accounts of brave men. Heroes have given their lives to save a friend, soldiers have rushed courageously into battle against insurmountable odds. Men and women through the ages have shown their courage and lack of fear in thousands of ways.

Now scientists are interested in knowing just what fear is. They are experimenting in an effort to analyze the thing called courage and bravery. In the laboratory of an English university experts are working to find some methods of testing fear and its underlying causes.

Prominent in the investigations is an instrument called the pupilmeter, which records the movements of the eyes under the stress of fear. The eyes are supposed to record the emotion of fear whether we want them to or not. The faintest flicker of an eyelid, barely perceptible though it may be to an observer, is registered by this remarkable instrument.

The experiment takes the form of a series of startling shocks administered to subjects who recline in chairs similar to those used by dentists. Special lenses, across which hair lines are drawn to enable the minutest measurements to be taken, are fitted to the eyes while a kind of handcuff is put on the wrist to permit blood pressure and pulse movements to be accurately noted. Another instrument, the pneumograph, which records changes in breathing, is fixed to the subject's chest. All the instruments are synchronized and, after a lapse of three minutes, during which the subject is asked to relax, the shocks are introduced.

The shocks take different forms. A pistol, for example, is fired without warning close to the subject's ear. A kind of super-Klaxon horn is next sounded under the same conditions, and immediately afterwards a sharp current of electricity is passed through the subject's body.

TIMELY TOPICS

MYSTERY ARTIST IN CHICAGO EXHIBIT PROVES TO BE MILLIONAIRE AMATEUR

The mystery of a flashing landscape canvas, called "And Then It Rained," was solved recently by the Chicago Art Institute in Chicago, Ill.

Karl Ruble, the records show, painted it. He submitted the canvas to the jury selecting subjects for the annual exhibition of Chicago artists. "And Then It Rained" was among the favored 269 canvases chosen from the 400 offered.

A woman's club bought "And Then It Rained" for \$400. Karl Ruble, however, could not be found. The address he had given was fictitious, and so the Art Institute was left with a \$400 check and an annoying mystery.

Edward B. Butler, Chicago millionaire and a trustee of the institute, came to see the Chicago artists' paintings.

"I believe you had a canvas here," he said to the custodian, "called 'And Then It Rained.' Karl Ruble painted it."

"Yes," replied the attendant, excitedly, "we are looking for Mr. Ruble. We have made \$400 for him. Perhaps you know him."

"I am Karl Ruble," said Mr. Butler.

He explained that he had wanted to do something "on his own." He wanted "And Then It Rained" to stand on its own merits.

Mr. Butler has followed painting as an avocation for years. His specialty is landscape work, and he goes to California and the Berkshire Hills for subjects.

He presented to the Art Institute the George Innes collection of twenty-two paintings, said to be the finest collection in America of the works of the great landscape artist.

RACES OF INDIA DIFFER IN THEIR TRADE METHODS

Hindus and Mohammedans are the active importers of India. The Hindu, by reason of his religion and the caste system, is a conservative. His intercourse with non Hindus, is subject to many restrictions. A devout Hindu is denied the privileges of travel by sea to countries beyond India; hence his business dealings in many cases are confined to as narrow a path as are his social activities. Today in India many Hindus have broken down some of the barriers of hereditary belief and observances, but they are still Hindus at heart and prohibited by their complex creed from maintaining close relations with unbelievers. The Mohammedan, on the other hand, knows no caste, although in his community are various sects. He will accept the hospitality of Europeans with appreciation. He will do business with Hindus unreservedly, and it is not uncommon to find Hindu clerks in Mohammedan business houses. He is not hampered by restrictions against foreign travel, and is more ready to adapt his business methods to foreign ideals than is the conservative Hindu.

In Karachi a large part of the retail trade is done by Hindus. The smaller shops in the bazaar, enjoying the best of the European patronage, are owned and controlled by Sindis—Hindus belonging

to the Province of Sind, of which Karachi is the capital. Mohammedans, on the other hand, control the large shops, which are frequently financed by wholesale firms in the "old city," or native quarter. Mohammedans, too, predominate among the bigger importers of metals, hardware and certain of the other recognized "heavy" lines.

Between these two creeds there exists little of the spirit of cooperation. Each Indian firm stands alone and holds firmly to the ideal of sharing with nobody its business confidences. For this reason one finds no consolidated buying. Were Indian import buying done through joint agencies—buyers representing a group of Indian importers handling several accounts—both importer and exporter might benefit substantially; but the Indian dreads such methods, fearing, perhaps, that his private affairs may become public. This is true of Mohammedans and Hindus alike, and the Indian business community, therefore, is a mass of dissociated units, each seeking to promote its own interest.—*N. Y. Times*.

BRITISH MOTORISTS ON TOUR FOR WORLD EXPORT BUSINESS

Alan R. Fenn, the English motorist, who recently spoke of the light car development abroad before the Society of Automotive Engineers in Detroit, will sail for Australia in a short time as a member of a delegation sent by British manufacturers to study motor conditions there and the possibilities of increasing the use of English-made cars. The other members include Major A. Boyd-Carpenter, Member of Parliament for Coventry, and Lieut. Col. A. Hacking, Secretary of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. They will visit all parts of Australia, afterward going to New Zealand and South Africa, and expect to return to England in August.

Their visit is part of the program of British motor manufacturers to compete more closely with American makers for foreign business.

For the first time in the history of the British motor industry, automobile exports in 1926 exceeded, numerically and in value, the imports. The total imports amounted to 23,211 vehicles, of which 1,350 were re-exported, leaving a balance of 21,861 vehicles to be sold in Great Britain. Exports amounted to 33,237 vehicles, thus exceeding imports by some 11,400 vehicles.

"One of the factors that has assisted in reducing imports," writes H. Thornton Rutter in the Daily Telegraph, "has been the application of import duties, first to motor cars and more recently to commercial and public service motor vehicles. Another has been the growing realization on the part of the British public of the merits of British cars and of the fact that, whatever may have been the case in years gone by, the motorist no longer has to buy other than British goods if he wants a thoroughly satisfactory article at a thoroughly moderate price. The tendency to buy British cars has been reinforced by a well-conducted campaign on the part of British manufacturers, who have pointed out to the public the many advantages of buying the products of home factories.—*N. Y. Times*.

PLUCK AND LUCK

—Latest Issues—

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1458 Young Ivanhoe; or, The Robin Hood of America. | 1483 Wrecked in An Unknown Sea; or, Cast On a Mysterious Island. |
| 1459 From Poor House to Palace; or, A Young Millionaire for a Year. | 1484 Hal Hart of Harvard; or, College Life at Cambridge. |
| 1460 Afloat with Captain Kidd; or, A Boy Among the Pirates. | 1485 Dauntless Young Douglas; or, The Prisoner of the Isle. |
| 1461 My Brother Jack; or, The Lazy One of the Family. | 1486 His Own Master; or, In Business for Himself. |
| 1462 The Boy Cliff Dwellers; or, The Mystery of the Enchanted Mountain. | 1487 The Lost Expedition; or, The City of Skulls, |
| 1463 Walt Whitney, the Boy Lawyer of New York. | 1488 Holding His Own; or, The Brave Fight of Bob Carter. |
| 1464 Old Ninety-Four, the Boy Engineer's Pride. | 1489 The Young Mounted Policeman. (A Story of New York City.) |
| 1465 The Timberdale Twins; or, The Boy Champion Skaters of Heron Lake. | 1490 Captain Thunder; or, The Boy Treasure Hunters of Robbers' Reef. |
| 1466 The Boy From Tombstone; or, The Boss of a "Bad" Town. | 1491 Across the Continent in a Wagon. (A Tale of Adventure.) |
| 1467 Rob Rollstone; or, The Boy Gold Hunters of the Philippines. | 1492 Six Years in Siberia; or, 2000 Miles in Search of a Name. |
| 1468 Driven Into the Street; or, The Fate of An Outcast Boy. | 1493 The Slave King; or, Fighting the Despoiler of the Ocean. |
| 1469 Across the Pacific in a Dory; or, Two Boys' Trip to China. | 1494 The Man in the Iron Cage; or, "Which Was the Boy?" |
| 1470 Young Cadmus; or, The Adventures of Lafayette's Champion. | 1495 With Stanley On His Last Trip; or, Emin Pasha's Rescue. |
| 1471 The Boy Sheriff; or, The House That Stood on the Line. | 1496 Appointed to West Point; or, Fighting His Own Way. |
| 1472 The Little Red Fox; or, The Midnight Riders of Wexford. | 1497 The Black Magician and His Invisible Pupil. |
| 1473 Dick, the Half-Breed; or, The Trail of the Indian Chief. | 1498 In the Phantom City; or, The Adventures of Dick Daunt. |
| 1474 The Nihilist's Son; or, The Spy of the Third Section. | 1499 The Mad Marcon; or, The Boy Castaways of the Malay Islands. |
| 1475 The Star Athletic Club; or, The Champions of the Rival Schools. | 1500 Little Red Cloud, the Boy Indian Chief. |
| 1476 The Aberdeen Athletics; or, The Boy Champions of the Century Club. | 1501 Nobody's Son; or, The Strange Fortunes of a Smart Boy. |
| 1477 Left on Treasure Island; or, The Boy Who Was Forgotten. | 1502 Shere Line Sam, the Young Southern Engineer; or, Railroading in War Times. |
| 1478 Toney, the Boy Clown; or, Across the Continent With a Circus. | 1503 The Gold Queen; or, Two Yankee Boys in Never Never Land. |
| 1479 The White Nine; or, The Race for the Oakville Pennant. | 1504 A Poor Irish Boy; or, Fighting His Own Way. |
| 1480 The Discarded Son; or, The Curse of Drink. | 1505 Big Bone Island; or, Lost in the Wilds of Siberia. |
| 1481 Molly, the Moonlighter; or, Out on the Hills of Ireland. | 1506 Rolly Rock; or, Chasing the Mountain Bandits. |
| 1482 A Young Monte Cristo; or, Back to the World for Vengeance. | 1507 His Last Chance; or, Uncle Dick's Fortune. |
| | 1508 Dick Dareall; or The Boy Blockade Runner. |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 8 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps.

WESTBURY PUBLISHING CO., Inc.

140 Cedar Street.

New York City